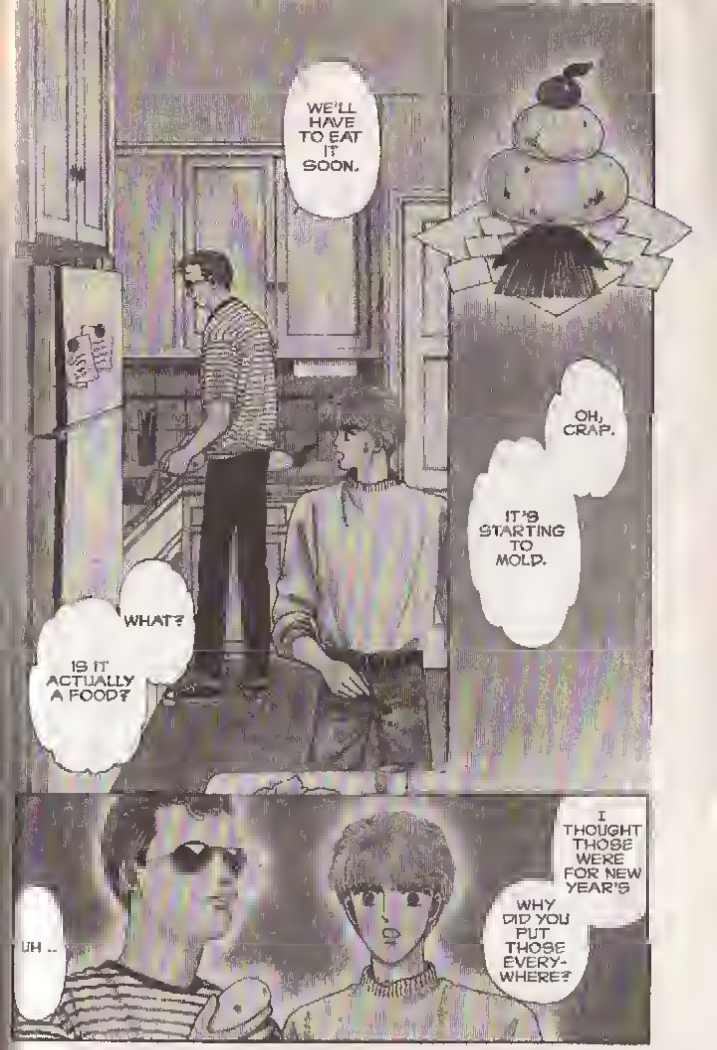
CIPHER
Scene 9. BAD DREAMS

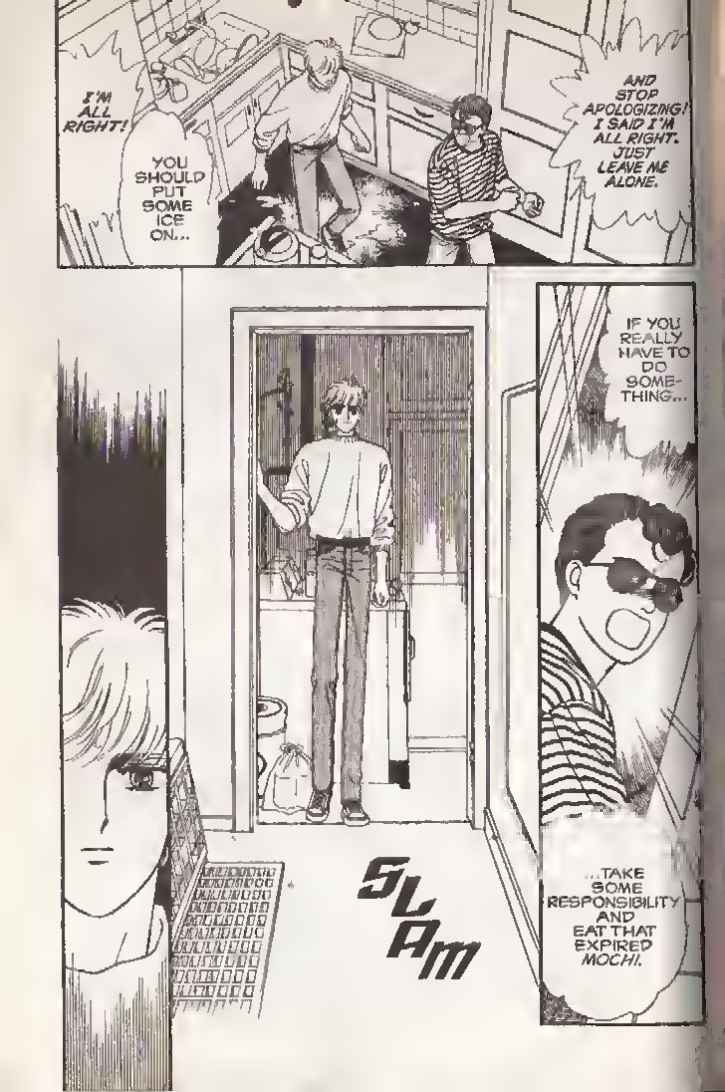

WE'LL HAVE TO EAT IT SOON.
OH, CRAP.
IT'S STARTING TO MOLD.
WHAT?
IS IT ACTUALLY A FOOD?
I THOUGHT THOSE WERE FOR NEW YEAR'S
WHY DID YOU PUT THOSE EVERY-WHERE?
UH ..

I SEE...
HEY, GIMME A HAND WITH THIS.
WHOMP
WE PUT THEM IN PLACES THAT LOOK DANGEROUS...
IT'S A GOOD LUCK CHARM. ..OR PLACES WE'RE AFRAID MIGHT CATCH FIRE.
OKAY.
TURN OFF THE HEAT AND POUR THE HOT WATER INTO A BOWL.
SSSSH
OW...

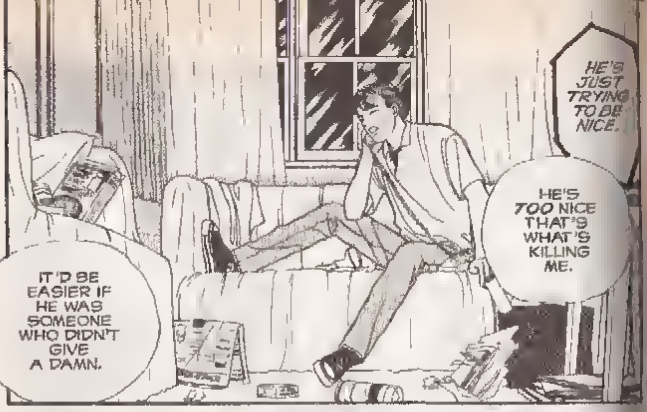
AGH!
HAL!
OWW!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, YOU FRIGGIN' MORON?!

ZAAA
SQUIRT
GRAB
OW OW OW!
ARE YOU DEAF?! LEGGO OF ME!
ZAAA
SPL
ASH
OW!
WHAT THE...? DON'T PUT MY FOOT IN THE SINK!
HEY...
SPLASH
OKAY, OKAY!
GET SOME ICE!

I JUST WANT TO HELP.
SORRY!
NO, WAIT! STOP THAT!
IT ONLY SPILLED ON MY SHOES. IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
Quick follow up
YOU'RE OVER-REACTING.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET SO EXCITED OVER THIS, FOR PETE'S SAKE!
I'M NOT GONNA DIE FROM THIS! I SAID IT'S NO BIG DEAL!
SORRY.
PLEASE DON'T DIE ON ME, HAL.


I'M ALL RIGHT!
YOU SHOULD PUT SOME ICE ON...
AND STOP APOLOGIZING! I SAID I'M ALL RIGHT. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
IF YOU REALLY HAVE TO DO SOME-THING...
...TAKE SOME RESPONSIBILITY AND EAT THAT EXPIRED MOCHI.
SLAM

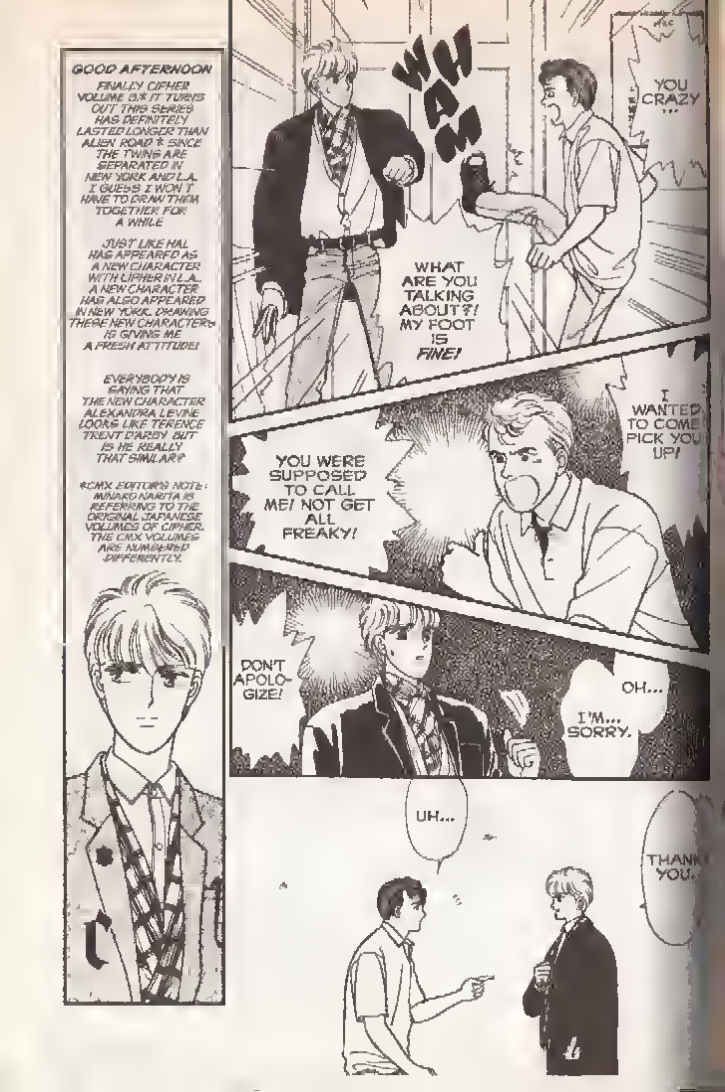
I'VE GOT TO DO SOME-THING...
...TO MAKE UP FOR IT.
JANUARY
IT'S DRIVING ME CRAZY.
THIS GUY TAKES EVERYTHING SO SERIOUSLY.


HE'S JUST TRYING TO BE NICE.
HE'S *TOO* NICE THAT'S WHAT'S KILLING ME.
IT'D BE EASIER IF HE WAS SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN.

I'M SICK OF ALL THIS POLITE-NESS. I CAN'T EVEN MAKE A JOKE, SINCE HE TAKES IT ALL SO SERIOUSLY.

I DON'T THINK HE WANTS TO KEEP PUTTING UP WITH THIS HIMSELF.
IS THERE SOME REASON FOR IT?
IT'S KILLING ME BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I *DON'T* WANT TO DO!
I don't really hate him, after all.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST PUT UP WITH IT?
THE TWO WEEKS END TOMORROW RIGHT?

BUT IT'S LATE. IT'S ALREADY SEVEN...
RATTLE RATTLE
CREAK
KACHAK
NAH, HE'S GOT A JOB.
HE'S NOT THERE, IS HE?
HE'S GONNA CALL ME TO COME PICK HIM UP WHEN HE'S DONE.
JUST SLEEP ON IT TONIGHT.
YEAH.
SLAM
I'M HOME.
WH- WHAT??
SORRY. DID I STARTLE YOU?
I DECIDED TO TAKE THE BUS HOME.
WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL ME??
I DIDN'T WANT TO BOTHER YOU.
I THOUGHT, WITH YOUR BAD FOOT AND ALL...
GACHAK


GOOD AFTERNOON
FINALLY, CIPHER VOLUME SIX. IT TURNS OUT THIS SERIES HAS DEFINITELY LASTED LONGER THAN ALIEN ROAD * SINCE THE TWINS ARE SEPARATED IN NEW YORK AND L.A. I GUESS I WON'T HAVE TO DRAW THEM TOGETHER FOR A WHILE
JUST LIKE HAL HAS APPEARED AS A NEW CHARACTER WITH CIPHER IN L.A., A NEW CHARACTER HAS ALSO APPEARED IN NEW YORK. DRAWING THESE NEW CHARACTERS IS GIVING ME A FRESH ATTITUDE!
EVERYBODY IS SAYING THAT THE NEW CHARACTER ALEXANDRA LEVINE LOOKS LIKE TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY, BUT IS HE REALLY THAT SIMILAR?
*CMX EDITOR'S NOTE: MINARO NARITA IS REFERRING TO THE ORIGINAL JAPANESE VOLUMES OF CIPHER. THE CMX VOLUMES ARE NUMBERED DIFFERENTLY.
WHAM
YOU CRAZY...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! MY FOOT IS FINE!
I WANTED TO COME PICK YOU UP!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO CALL ME! NOT GET ALL FREAKY!
DON'T APOLOGIZE!
OH...
I'M... SORRY.
UH...
THANK YOU.
4

WHY ARE YOU THANKING ME?
AFTER ALL, I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.
.....
BLUSH
AH...
CUT IT OUT.
THAT DOESN'T MATTER.
I'M JUST HAPPY YOU WANTED TO.
I SEE.
HAL'S ACTUALLY REALLY SHY.
My shades!
AGH!
THIS IS STUPID!
BLUSH
THIS IS ALL WAY TOO MUCH!

HE'S PRETTY INNOCENT, REALLY.
PAT
WHEN YOU THANK HIM TO HIS FACE OR WORRY ABOUT HIM...
...HE GETS ALL FLUSTERED AND DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
Hiding his eyes
Just felt like it.
WHAT WAS THAT?
YOU'RE SO CUTE!
NO, NOT AT ALL...
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE FUN OF ME?!
CUTE?!

I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THIS FROM SOME SPOILED EAST COAST BRAT!
YOU'RE SERIOUS, POLITE... AGH! NO, NO!
YOU TAKE EVERYTHING SO SERIOUSLY!
THAT'S WHAT'S DRIVING ME CRAZY, I TELL YA!
IF I TOLD YOU THE TRUTH...
..YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S "CUTE!"
UGH!!
I'LL BET YOU'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN IN A FIGHT.
YOU'VE GOT SKIN AS PRETTY AS A GIRL'S.
PAT PAT
OH YES I HAVE!

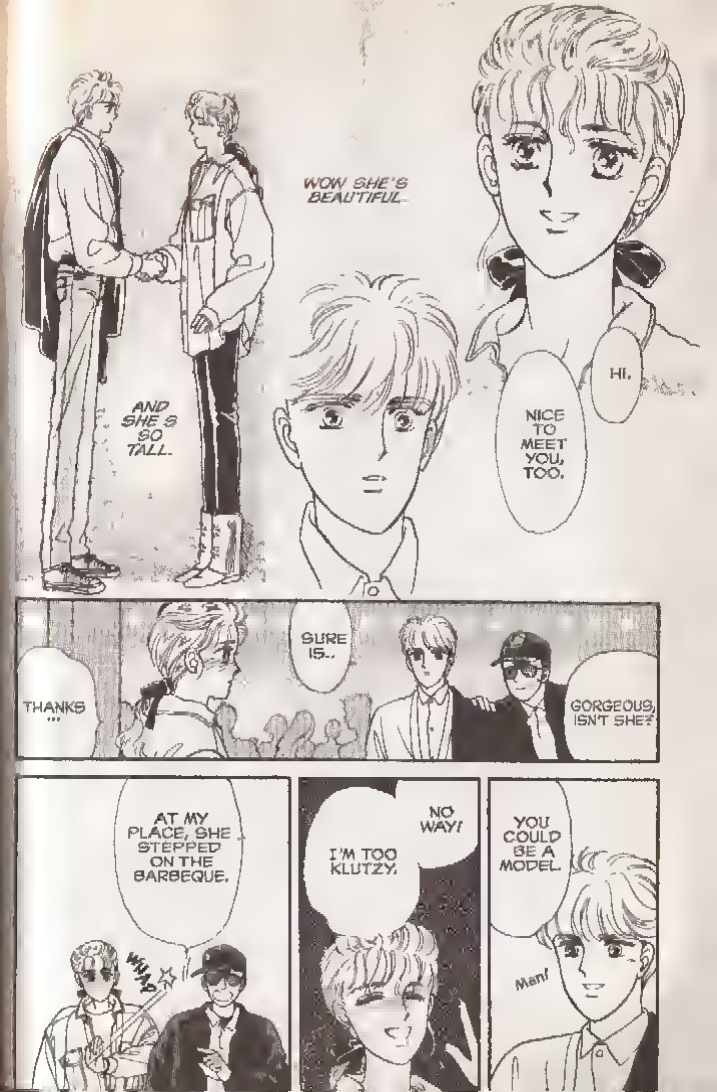
GRRR
WHAT?
I DON'T SEE ANY-THING.
HERE'S THE PROOF!
HA! I DON'T BELIEV THAT
POIK!
IF YOU THINK I'M LYING, TRY SAYING IT AGAIN!
AND DON'T CALL ME A SPOILED BRAT!
WHEN I GOT IN A FIGHT, I DIDN'T JUST HIDE BEHIND MOM'S APRON!

WHEN A RIVAL TALKED TRASH TO ME AT AN AUDITION, I FILLED HIS SHOES WITH DOG CRAP!
I SOLD FLOUR AS COCAINE. WHEN I GOT CAUGHT, I GOT THE CRAP KICKED OUT OF ME.
IN THE NEW YORK GHETTOS, I'M A FULL-FLEDGED STEEL REINFORCED BRAT!
AGH!
THAT'S RIGHT! I AM A BRAT!
HUH?!
ACTU-ALLY, I...
AND THERE'S MORE ...
AT AN AUDITION WHEN I WAS TEN—

I WAS CHOSEN TO PLAY "THE LITTLE PRINCE."
TURNING PALE
HA HA HA HA HA
BWA HA HA HA HA HA
BWA HA HA HA HA
There's no bigger brat than that!
Heh heh heh
YOU'RE... YOU RE...
YOU
HA HA...

HA HA HA HA HA
YOU...
YOU'RE...
BWA HA HA HA HA HA
YOU...
HEH HEH HEH
COME ON. LET'S GO.
NOW? WHERE?
JUST COME ON.
SNACK

I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE GOING TO MAKE IT.
YEAH, WELL... THINGS CHANGE.
HEY, HAL!
THIS IS SARAH COLEMAN. SHE GOES TO COLLEGE WITH ME.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
Infamous?
THIS IS THE INFAMOUS ROOM-MATE-- ROY RANG.
SORRY I HUNG UP ON YOU LIKE THAT.
OH...


AND SHE'S SO TALL.
WOW SHE'S BEAUTIFUL.
HI.
NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO.
THANKS ...
SURE IS..
GORGEOUS, ISN'T SHE?
AT MY PLACE, SHE STEPPED ON THE BARBEQUE.
WHAP
NO WAY!
I'M TOO KLUTZY.
YOU COULD BE A MODEL.
Man!

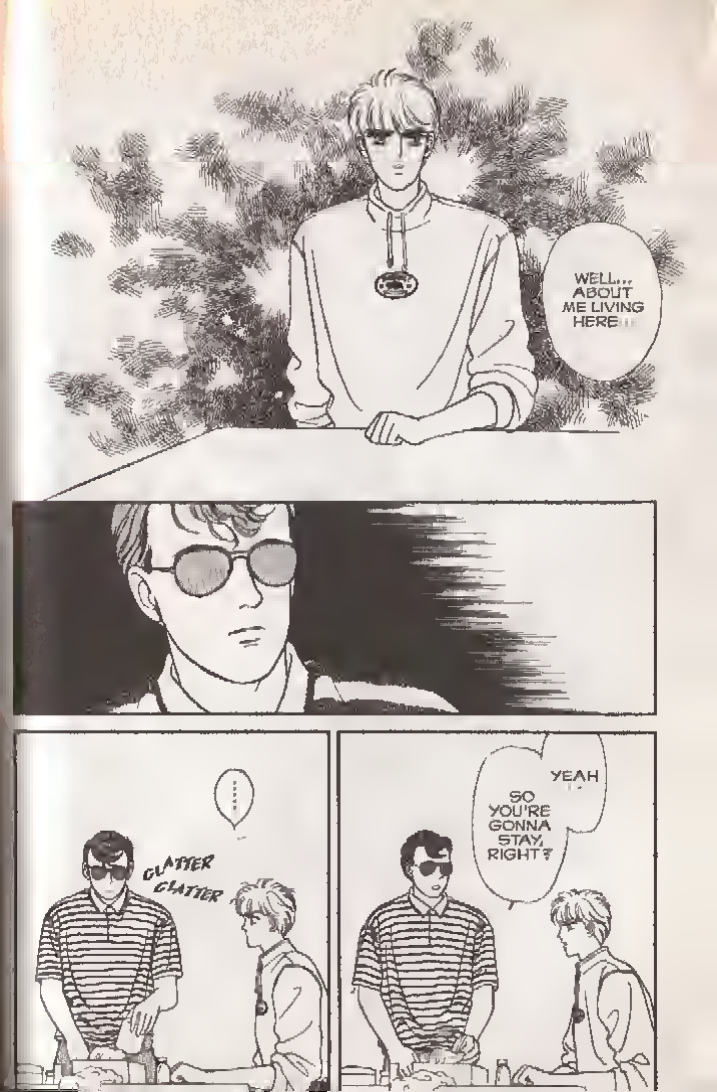
WHAT DID HE MEAN BY "THINGS CHANGE?"
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN BEFORE YOU CAME HERE?
HI
IS THIS HAL'S HANG-OUT?
OW!
ARE FRANCES AND MARK HERE?
THEY'RE OUT ON THE FLOOR.
YES.
HIS FRIENDS ALL COME HERE.
THAT'S HAL.
HE TRIES TO ACT TOUGH, BUT HE REALLY CARES ABOUT PEOPLE.
I SEE.
WHETHER HE LIKES OR IS SICK OF ME...
I CAN'T TELL.
HE LAUGHED AT ME!
?

I'M GLAD HE FINALLY FOUND A ROOM-MATE.
I HOPE YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF HIM.
HE'S ACTUALLY PRETTY LONELY
HE SAID RECENTLY, HE WAS THINKING ABOUT GETTING A DOG
OH, I GUESS YOU'VE ALREADY FIGURED THAT OUT.
I DON'T NEED TO TELL YOU ANY-THING.
WHAT, ME?!
I DON'T DISLIKE HAL.
BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW HE FEELS.
WHAT, YOU DON'T WANT TO LIVE WITH HAL?
I HAVEN'T DECIDED WHETHER TO MOVE IN YET!
WAIT A MINUTE!

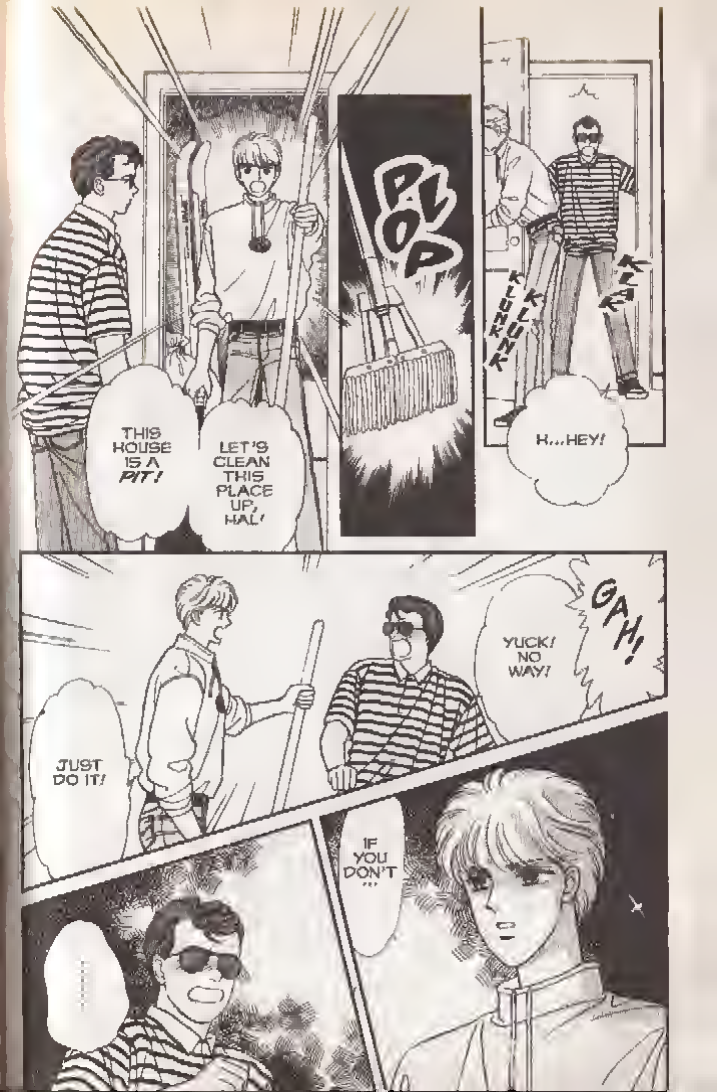
'ZUP.
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU, ROY.
THIS IS MY BUDDY, MARK.
I FEEL LIKE I'M JUST GETTING IN HIS WAY.
HE FEELS THE SAME.
HEY!
BIRDS OF A FEATHER.
Hello!
SHEILA AND FRANCES
THAT'S ERIC.
IT'S HARD ENOUGH TAKING CARE OF MYSELF.

IF ONLY I COULD BE STRONGER ...

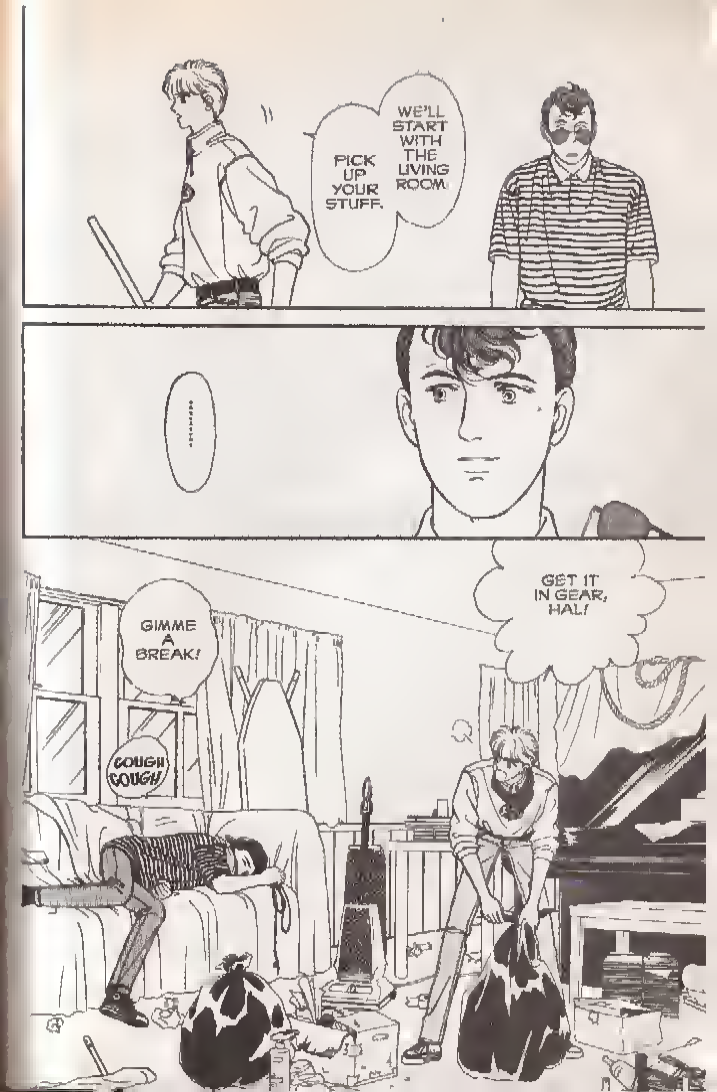
I MADE SOME COFFEE
CLICK
THANKS.
IT'S BEEN TWO WEEKS.
HUH?
.....
GULP


WELL... ABOUT ME LIVING HERE...
YEAH
SO YOU'RE GONNA STAY, RIGHT?
CLATTER CLATTER

THAT'S IT?
.....
OH...
AH, I SEE..
YOU GOT A PROBLEM.
WHAT?
Gulp
YEAH- THERE IS ONE PROBLEM.


THIS HOUSE IS A PIT!
LET'S CLEAN THIS PLACE UP, HAL!
BOOP!
KLUNK KLUNK
KLUNK
H...HEY!
JUST DO IT!
YUCK! NO WAY!
GAH!
IF YOU DON'T ...

AAAGH!
.....
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, DO IT YOURSELF!
WHAT'S WITH THE ATTITUDE?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS LOOKING FOR A PLACE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN.
PAT
OKAY, OKAY! I GET IT!
I'LL CLEAN UP, OKAY?

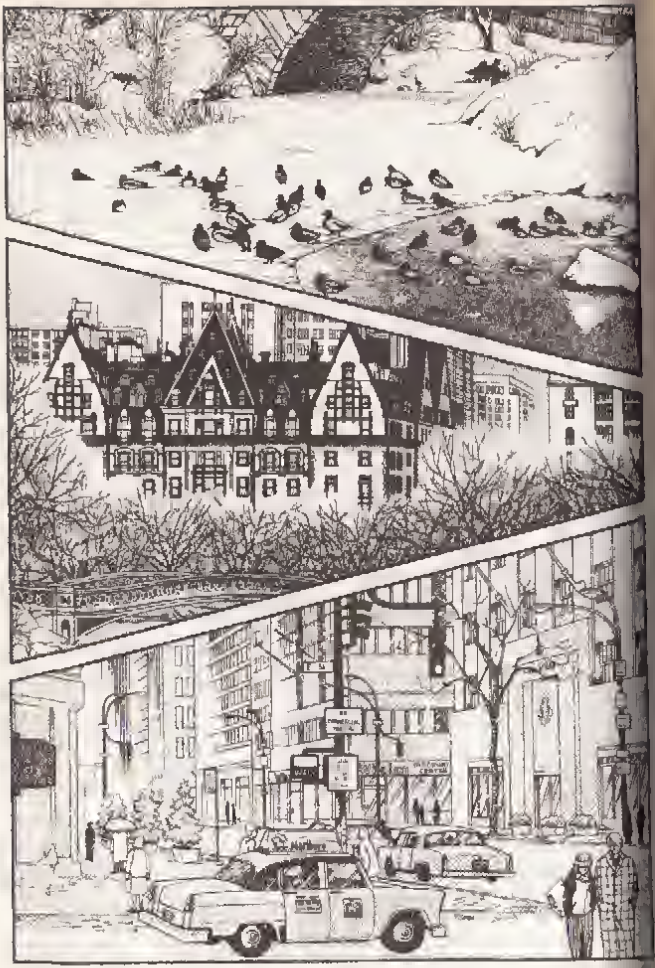

WE'LL START WITH THE LIVING ROOM.
PICK UP YOUR STUFF.
.....
GET IT IN GEAR, HAL!
GIMME A BREAK!
COUGH! COUGH!

GLIGK
RRRING
RRRING

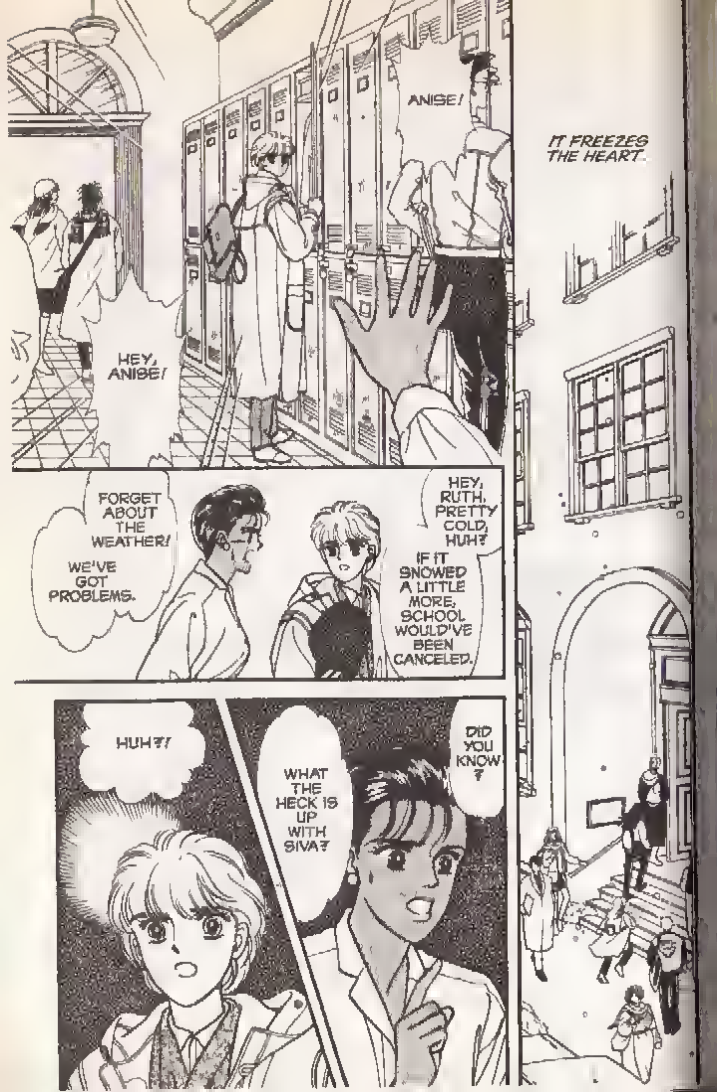
RRING
RRRING
RRRING
RRRING
HELLO?
CLICK

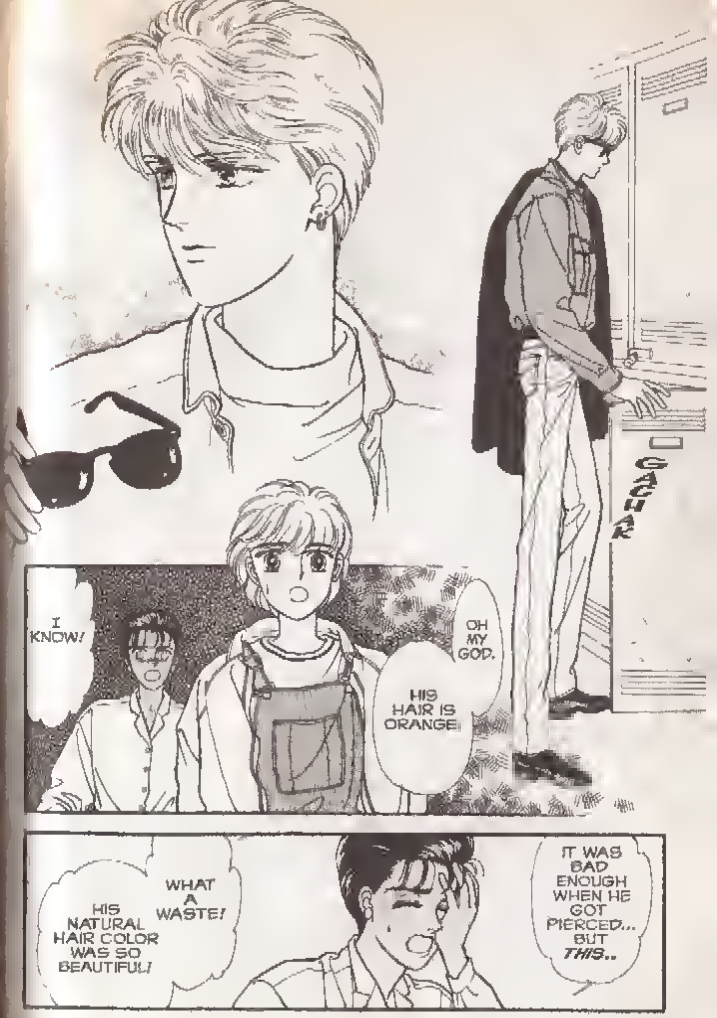
Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday to you
Happy birthday Dear Jake
Happy birthday to you
CLIK

KLAK

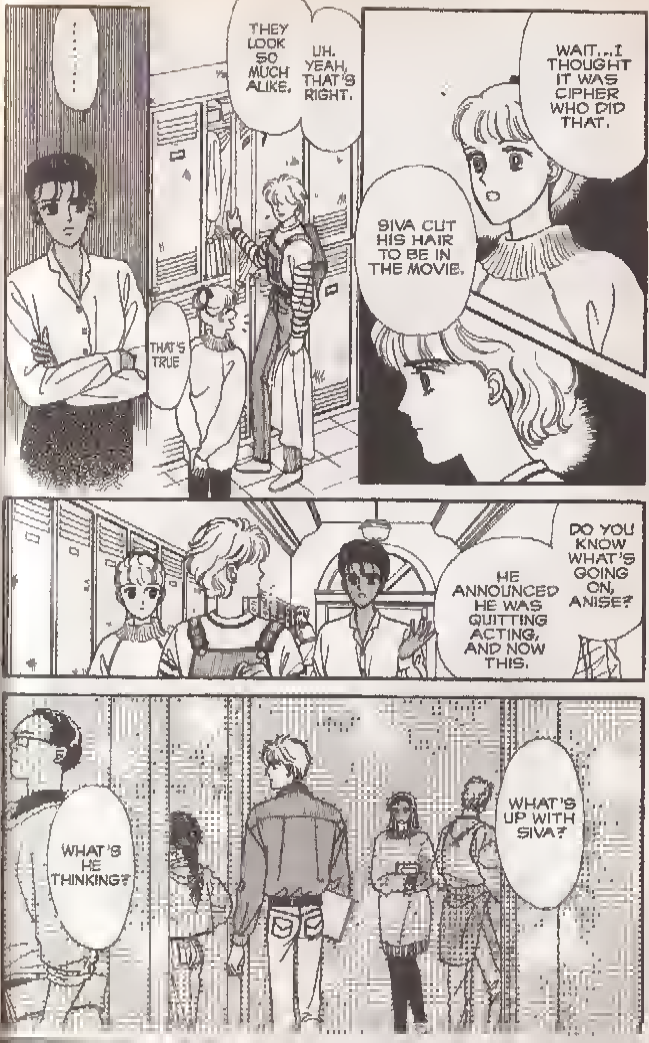


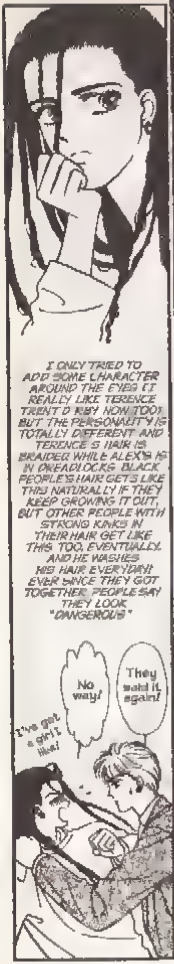
WINTER IS HARSH IN NEW YORK.


ANISE!
IT FREEZES THE HEART.
HEY, ANISE!
HEY, RUTH, PRETTY COLD, HUH?
IF IT SNOWED A LITTLE MORE, SCHOOL WOULD'VE BEEN CANCELED.
FORGET ABOUT THE WEATHER!
WE'VE GOT PROBLEMS.
DID YOU KNOW?
WHAT THE HECK IS UP WITH SIVA?
HUH?!

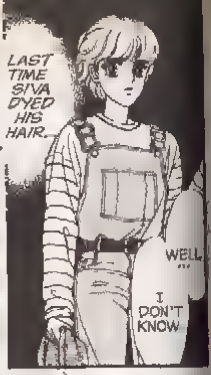

GACHA
OH MY GOD.
HIS HAIR IS ORANGE!
I KNOW!
IT WAS BAD ENOUGH WHEN HE GOT PIERCED... BUT THIS..
WHAT A WASTE!
HIS NATURAL HAIR COLOR WAS SO BEAUTIFUL!

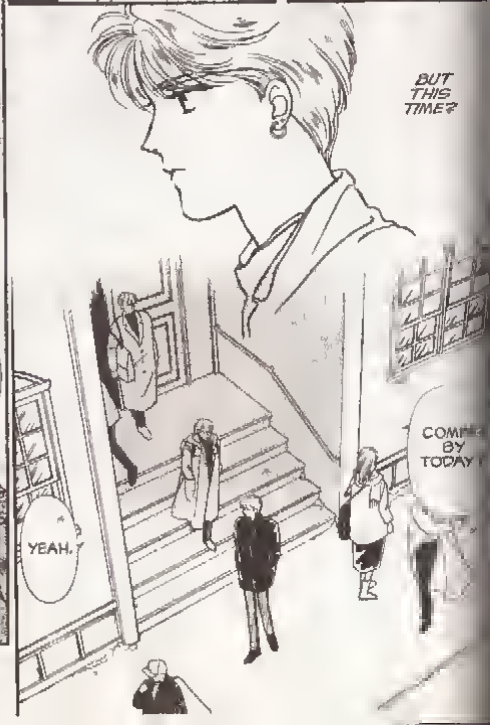
I JUST LOVE IT!
THE HAIR COLOR, THE EARRING... HE'S ALWAYS SO FASHIONABLE!
Where's this coming from?
MO... MOLLY...
HE'D EVEN LOOK GOOD IN A DRESS!
YOU THINK SO?
I THINK IT'S GREAT LIKE THIS!
I SAW HIM LIKE THAT ONCE.
HE DID SOMETHING LIKE THIS LAST SUMMER
UH... NO...
YOU HAVEN'T SAID A WORD. DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANISE?
I love it.
OH...
GAH!
NO, HE WOULDN'T! HE'D LOOK AWFUL!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH, YOU IDIOT!

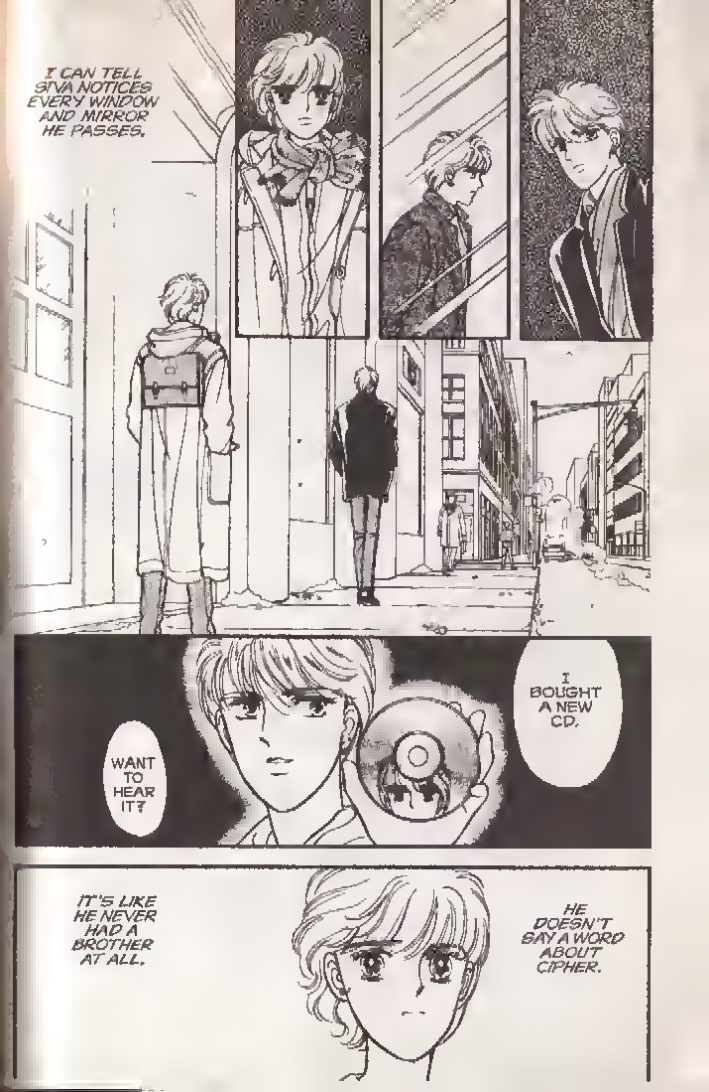

.....
THEY LOOK SO MUCH ALIKE.
UH. YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S TRUE
WAIT...I THOUGHT IT WAS CIPHER WHO DID THAT.
SIVA CUT HIS HAIR TO BE IN THE MOVIE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, ANISE?
HE ANNOUNCED HE WAS QUITTING ACTING, AND NOW THIS.
WHAT'S HE THINKING?
WHAT'S UP WITH SIVA?

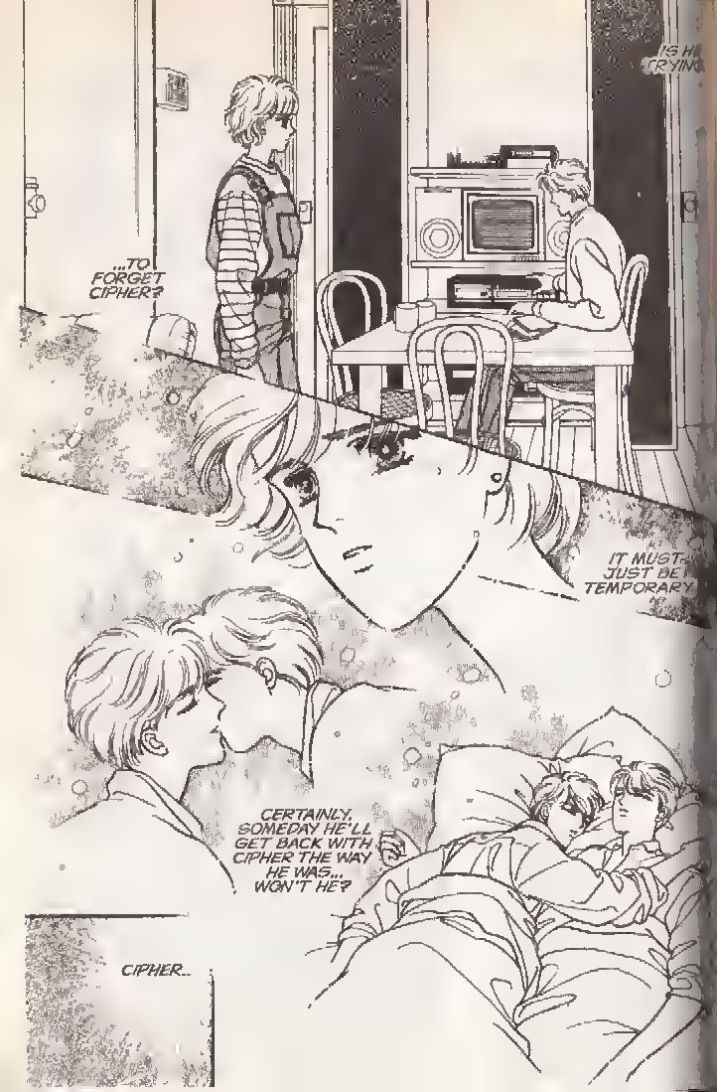

I ONLY TRIED TO ADD SOME CHARACTER AROUND THE EYES IT REALLY LIKE TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY NOW TOO! BUT THE PERSONALITY IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT AND TERENCE'S HAIR IS BRAIDED WHILE ALEX'S IS IN DREADLOCKS. BLACK PEOPLE'S HAIR GETS LIKE THIS NATURALLY IF THEY KEEP GROWING IT OUT, BUT OTHER PEOPLE WITH STRONG KINKS IN THEIR HAIR GET LIKE THIS TOO, EVENTUALLY. AND HE WASHES HIS HAIR EVERYDAY! EVER SINCE THEY GOT TOGETHER, PEOPLE SAY THEY LOOK "DANGEROUS"
No way!
They said it again!
I've got a girl's libido!

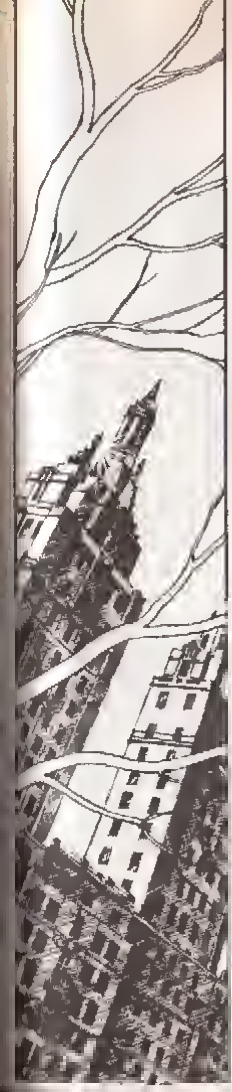
...BECAUSE HE COULDN'T WHEN THEY SHARED A LIFE.
I THOUGHT HE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT-- ON HIS OWN.

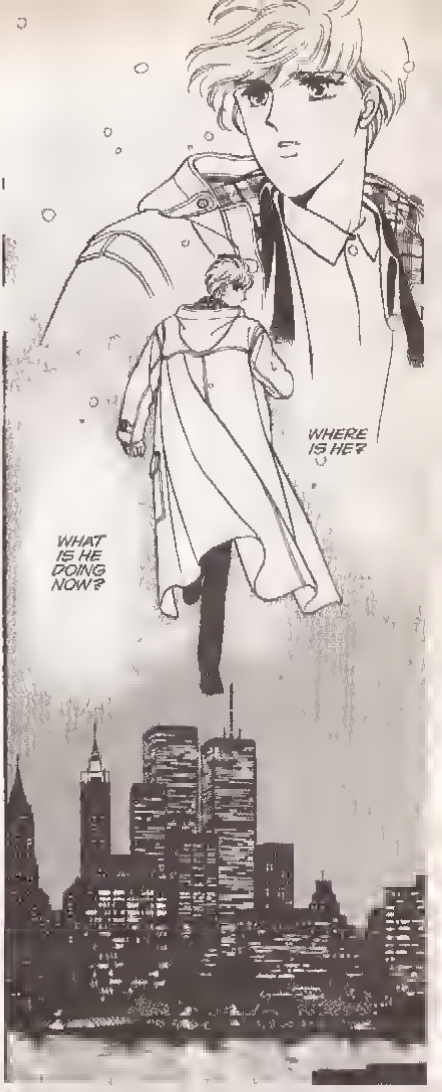

LAST TIME SIVA DYED HIS HAIR...
WELL...
I DON'T KNOW


BUT THIS TIME?
YEAH.
COMING BY TODAY?

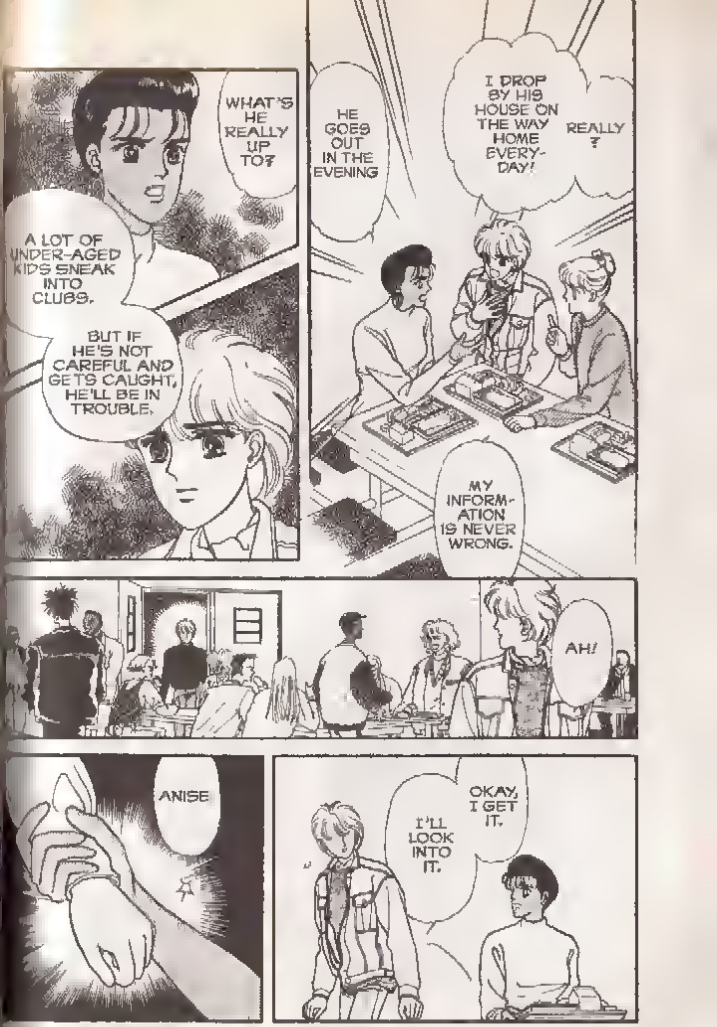

I CAN TELL SIVA NOTICES EVERY WINDOW AND MIRROR HE PASSES.
I BOUGHT A NEW CD.
WANT TO HEAR IT?
IT'S LIKE HE NEVER HAD A BROTHER AT ALL.
HE DOESN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT CIPHER.


...TO FORGET CIPHER?
IS HE TRYING
IT MUST... JUST BE TEMPORARY
CERTAINLY. SOMEDAY HE'LL GET BACK WITH CIPHER THE WAY HE WAS... WON'T HE?
CIPHER...

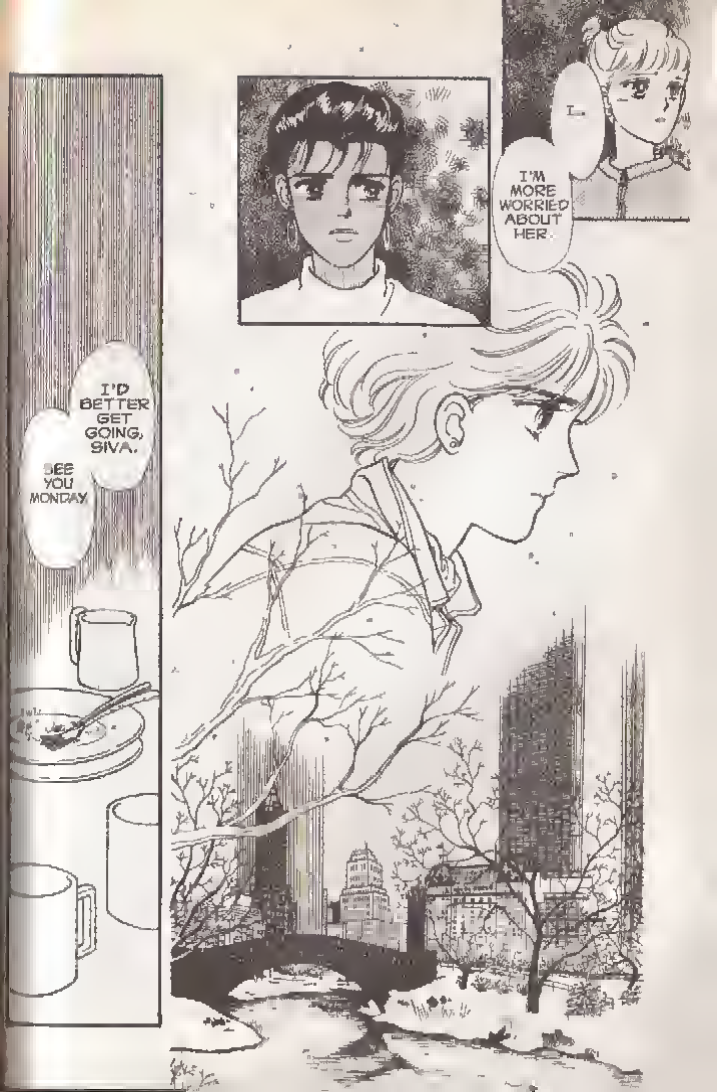


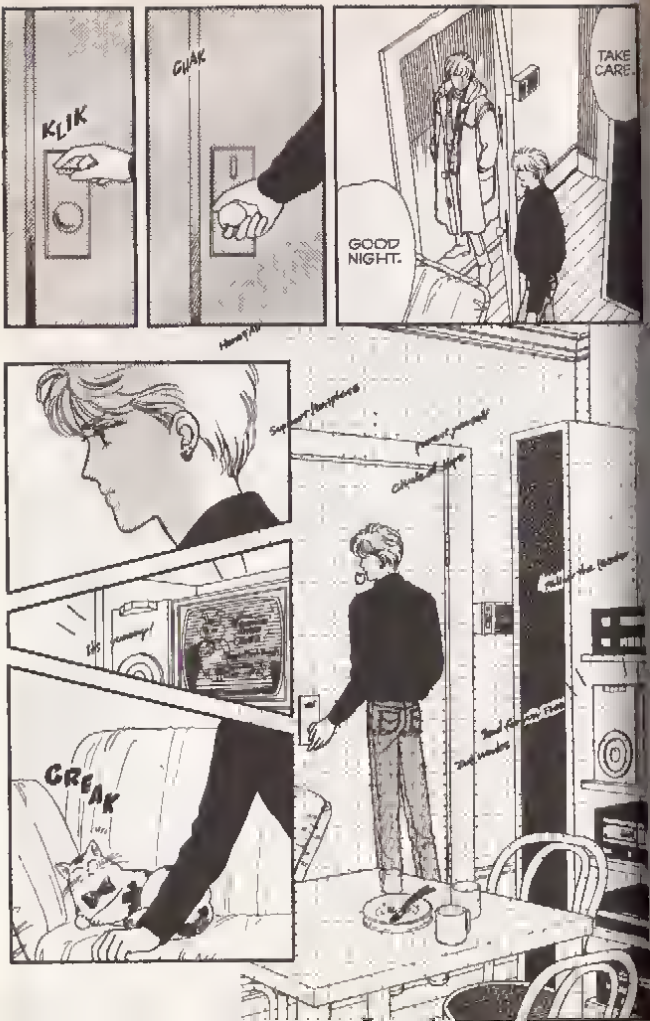

WHERE IS HE?
WHAT IS HE DOING NOW?

HEY, ANISE!
ABOUT SIVA AGAIN...
IT'S NOT HIS APPEARANCE THIS TIME.
WH-WHAT?
NOTHING ABOUT HIM LOOKED DIFFERENT TODAY.
NO, NOT THAT!
I'M TALKING ABOUT MUSIC CLUBS, DANCE CLUBS... STUFF LIKE THAT!
OH?
WHICH SCHOOL CLUBS, DID HE...?
RECENTLY...
IT APPEARS THAT HE'S BEEN GOING TO CLUBS ALL OVER.

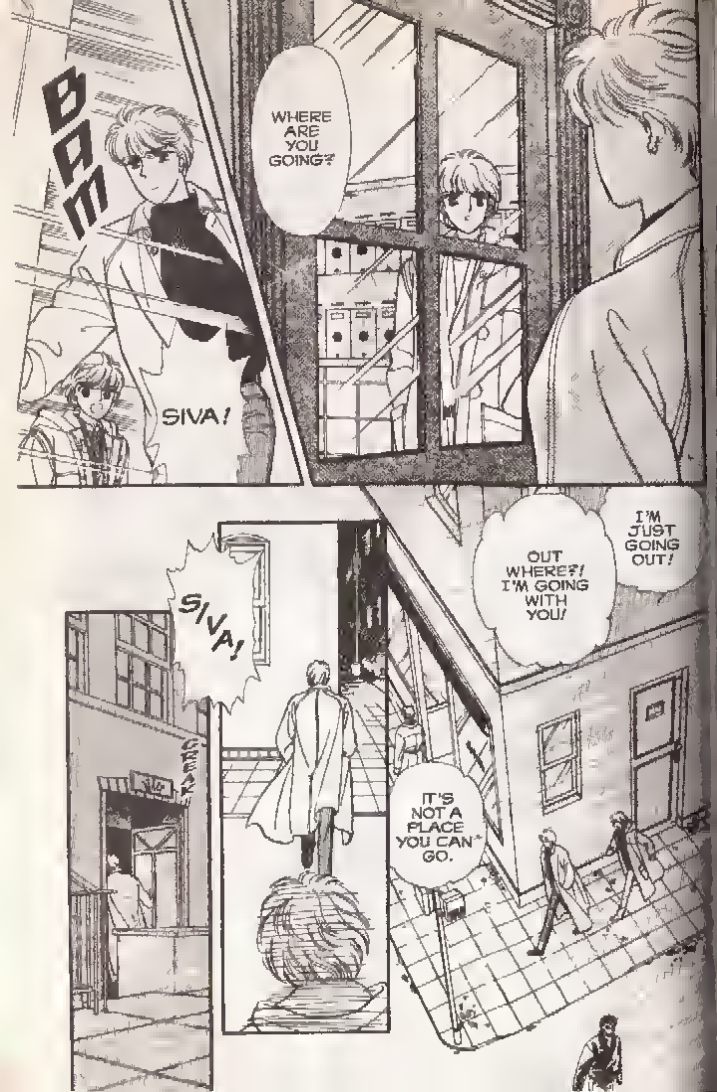

WHAT'S HE REALLY UP TO?
A LOT OF UNDER-AGED KIDS SNEAK INTO CLUBS.
BUT IF HE'S NOT CAREFUL AND GETS CAUGHT, HE'LL BE IN TROUBLE.
HE GOES OUT IN THE EVENING
I DROP BY HIS HOUSE ON THE WAY HOME EVERY-DAY!
REALLY ?
MY INFORM-ATION IS NEVER WRONG.
AH!
ANISE
OKAY, I GET IT.
I'LL LOOK INTO IT.

I'LL DO ANYTHING I CAN TO HELP!
IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, REMEMBER TO TELL ME.
YEAH ...
THANKS.
LET'S JUST WATCH THE SITUATION FOR A BIT.
WHEN I CAN'T KEEP QUIET ABOUT IT ANY MORE I'LL GO TALK TO ANISE.
.....
DUNNO
WE CAN ONLY HOPE.
I WONDER IF HE'LL TELL HER THE TRUTH.

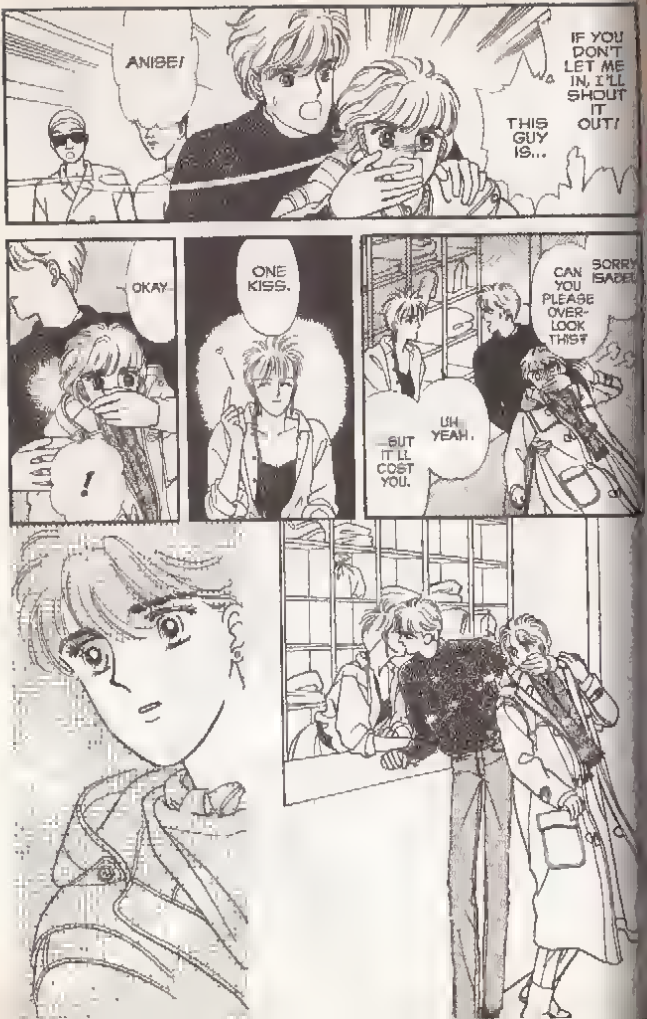

I...
I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT HER.
I'D BETTER GET GOING, SIVA.
SEE YOU MONDAY.

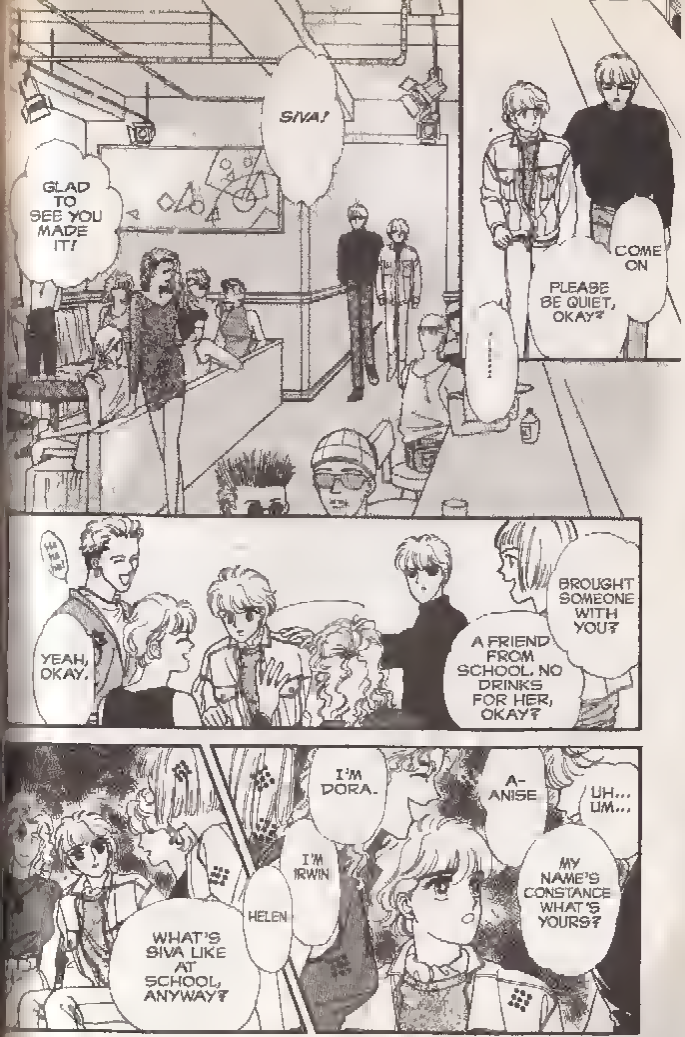

KLIK
CHAK
GOOD NIGHT.
TAKE CARE.
CREAK

NUZZLE
NUZZLE
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
BEEP
BEEP
WHOOSH

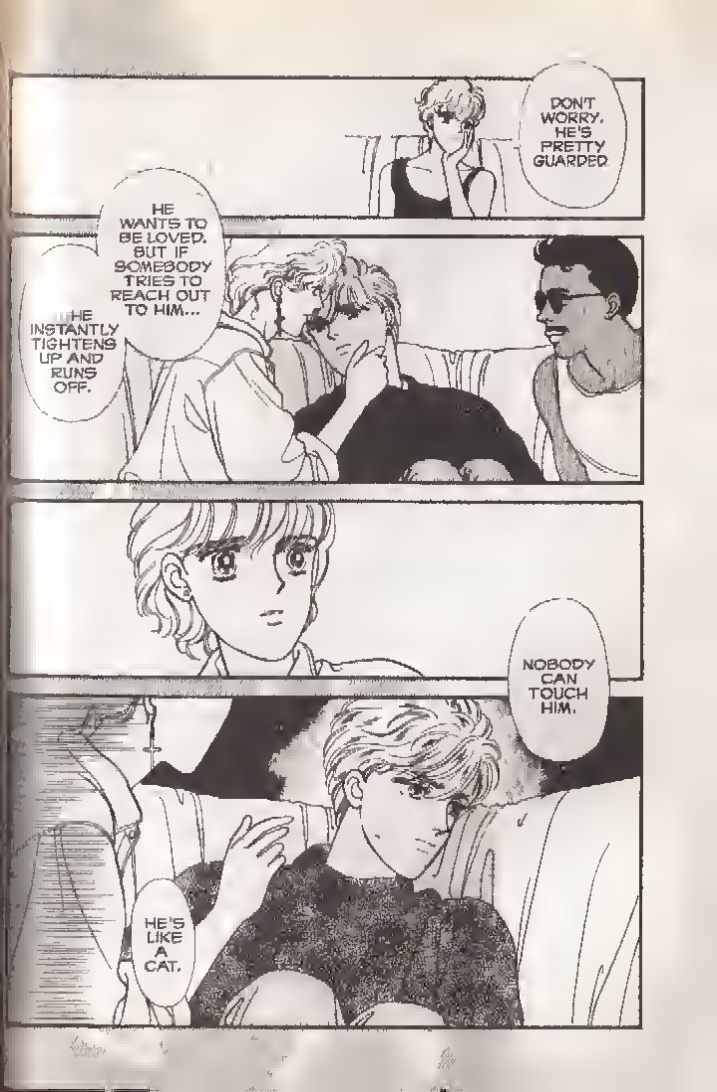

BAM
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
SIVA!
I'M JUST GOING OUT!
OUT WHERE?! I'M GOING WITH YOU!
SIVA!
CREAK
IT'S NOT A PLACE YOU CAN GO.

I'M SORRY, BUT KIDS AREN'T ALLOWED IN HERE.
HUH?
DASH
I'M... I'M NOT A KID!
I'M...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? GO ON HOME!
BUT YOU'RE UNDER-AGED TOO, YOU KNOW!
CLOMP
I'M THE SAME AGE AS THIS GUY!

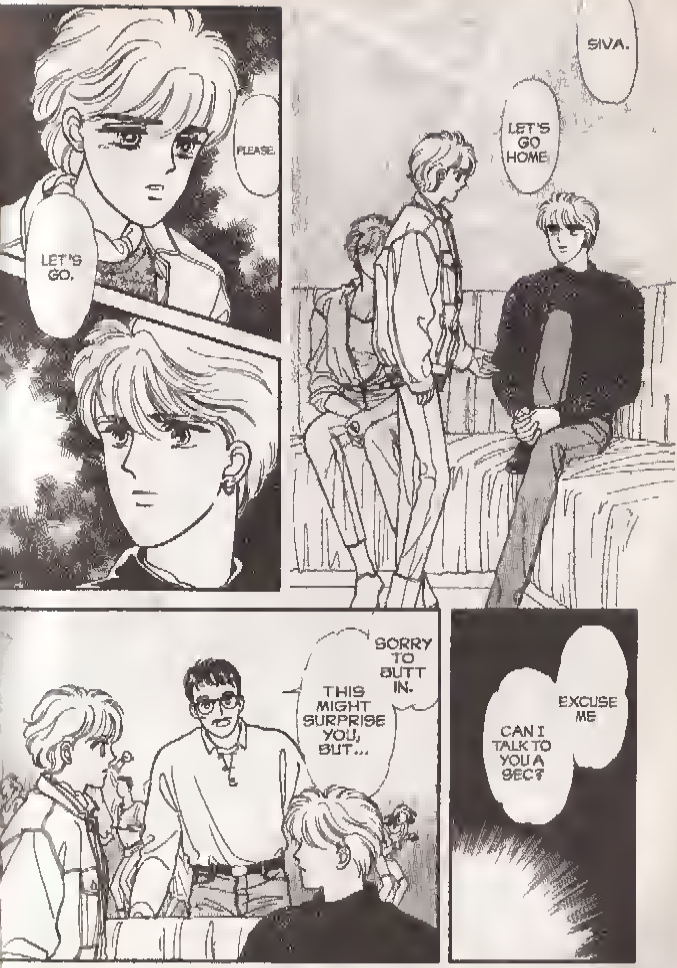

ANISE!
IF YOU DON'T LET ME IN, I'LL SHOUT IT OUT!
THIS GUY IS...
OKAY.
!
ONE KISS.
SORRY ISADEL
CAN YOU PLEASE OVER-LOOK THIS?
UH. YEAH.
BUT IT'LL COST YOU.


SIVA!
GLAD TO SEE YOU MADE IT!
COME ON
PLEASE BE QUIET, OKAY?
.....
BROUGHT SOMEONE WITH YOU?
A FRIEND FROM SCHOOL. NO DRINKS FOR HER, OKAY?
YEAH, OKAY.
I'M DORA.
A-ANISE
UH... UM...
I'M IRWIN
HELEN
MY NAME'S CONSTANCE WHAT'S YOURS?
WHAT'S SIVA LIKE AT SCHOOL, ANYWAY?

OH.
WHAT DOES HE—DO HERE?
I'VE SEEN HIM OTHER PLACES, TOO.
WELL ...I GUESS. MAYBE TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK.
DOES ...
DOES SIVA COME HERE OFEN?
....
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HE DOESN'T REALLY DRINK MUCH...OR DANCE.
IT'S BORING TO JUST SIT AT HOME ALONE, ISN'T IT?
ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT HIM?


DON'T WORRY. HE'S PRETTY GUARDED.
HE WANTS TO BE LOVED. BUT IF SOMEBODY TRIES TO REACH OUT TO HIM...
HE INSTANTLY TIGHTENS UP AND RUNS OFF.
NOBODY CAN TOUCH HIM.
HE'S LIKE A CAT.

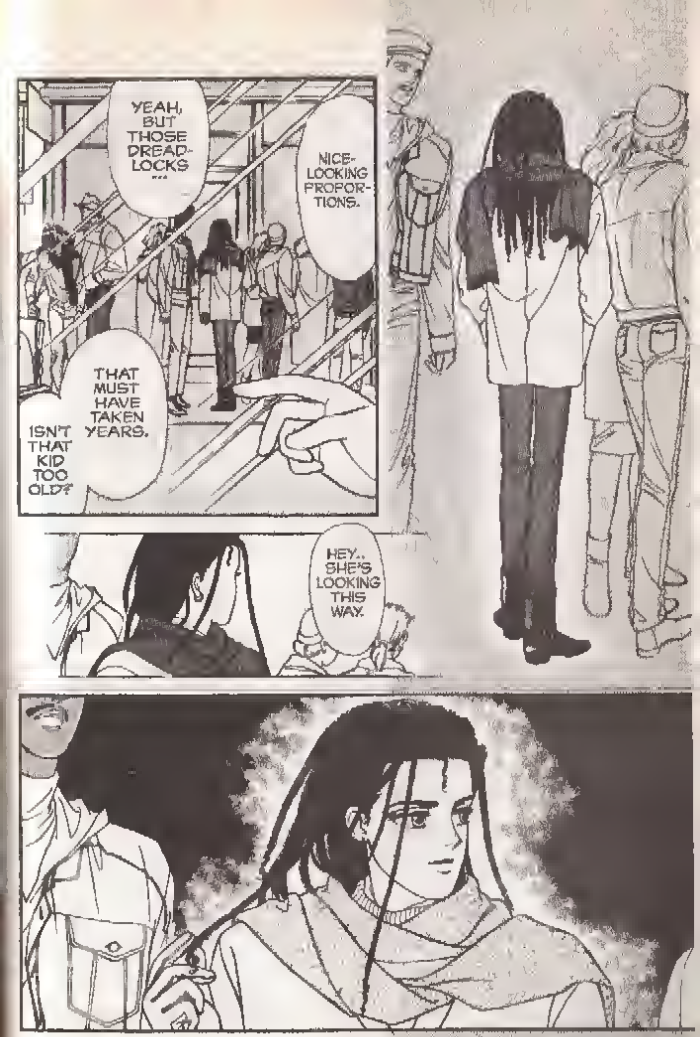
HE LOOKS MORE ALONE IN A CROWD OF PEOPLE.
I THINK...
HE LOOKS LIKE A DOG THAT'S LOST ITS MASTER.
SIVA ...


PLEASE.
LET'S GO.
SIVA.
LET'S GO HOME.
EXCUSE ME
CAN I TALK TO YOU A SEC?
SORRY TO BUTT IN.
THIS MIGHT SURPRISE YOU, BUT...

LISTEN.
HAVE YOU EVEN THOUGHT OF BECOMING A MODEL?
LET ME EXPLAIN IT FROM THE START.
I'M A WRITER AND EDITOR FOR THIS JAPANESE FASHION MAGAZINE.
12

THEY EVEN SELL IT AROUND HERE.
YEAH... I'VE HEARD OF THIS MAGAZINE.
REALLY ?!
THAT'LL MAKE THIS GO FASTER.
USING A LOCAL CAMERAMAN AND STYLIST..
I WANT TO DO A LAYOUT USING LOCAL MODELS.
IT WOULD BE GREAT IF I COULD GET YOU TO JOIN.
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, I'D LIKE YOU TO COME TO THE AUDITION
WE'RE DOING A SPECIAL SECOND ANNIVERSARY ISSUE, AND I'M HERE FOR A SPECIAL REPORT.
TOMOR-ROW
HERE'S THE ADDRESS.
WHEN IS IT?

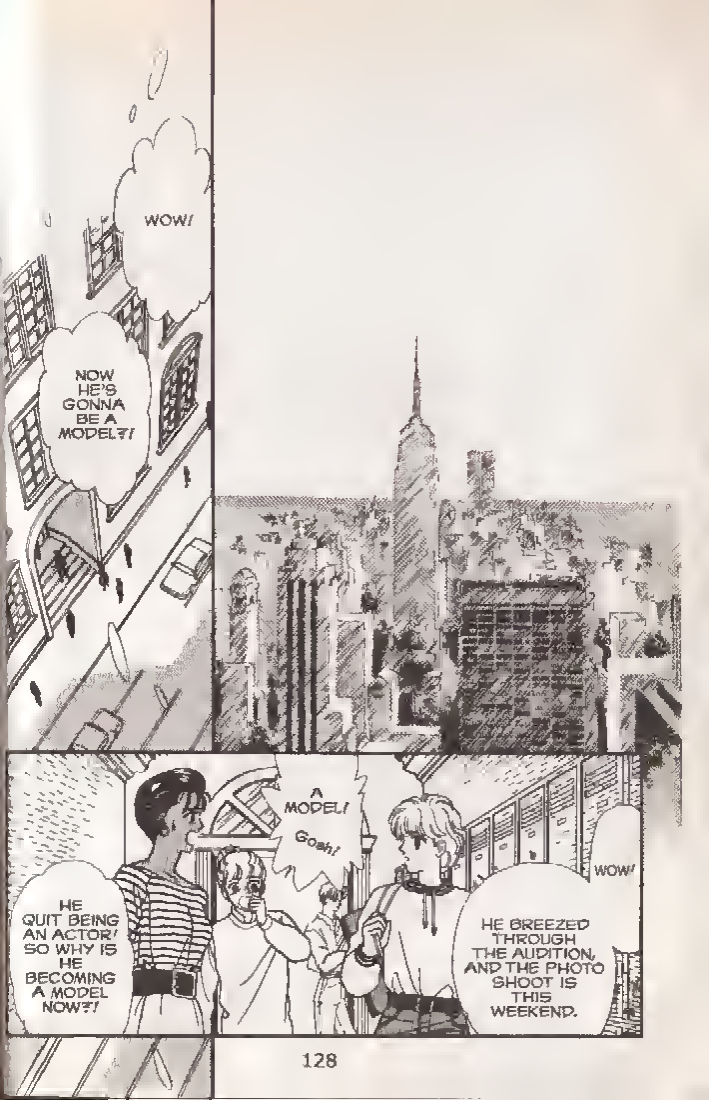
FRIENDS.
BRING AS MANY FRIENDS AS YOU WANT
IF YOU HAVE ANY THAT ARE INTERESTED.
I DON'T HAVE ANY.
BUT... BUT YOU MUST HAVE SOME ...
INVITE THEM.
IF YOU ASK THEM OVER THERE, YOU CAN GET AS MANY AS YOU WANT.
IT'S THE WEEKEND, SO THE PLACE IS PACKED.
THERE'RE ALL KINDS OF INTERESTING KIDS.
FOR EXAMPLE
HOW'S THAT ONE?


YEAH, BUT THOSE DREAD-LOCKS ...
NICE-LOOKING PROPOR-TIONS.
THAT MUST HAVE TAKEN YEARS.
ISN'T THAT KID TOO OLD?
HEY.. SHE'S LOOKING THIS WAY.

WHOA! SHE'S REALLY YOUNG!
THAT'S A LOVABLE TYPE OF FACE.
YEAH, SHE'S BEAUTIFUL.
GREAT EYES, LONG LASHES...
UH...
THAT'S A GUY, RIGHT?
HUH?
ISN'T IT A GIRL?
?!
SEE? SHE'S GOT A PIERCE
AWFUL SLIM FOR A GUY.
HE'S JUST SKINNY.
LET'S BET ON IT.
WELL, I'VE GOT ONE, TOO.

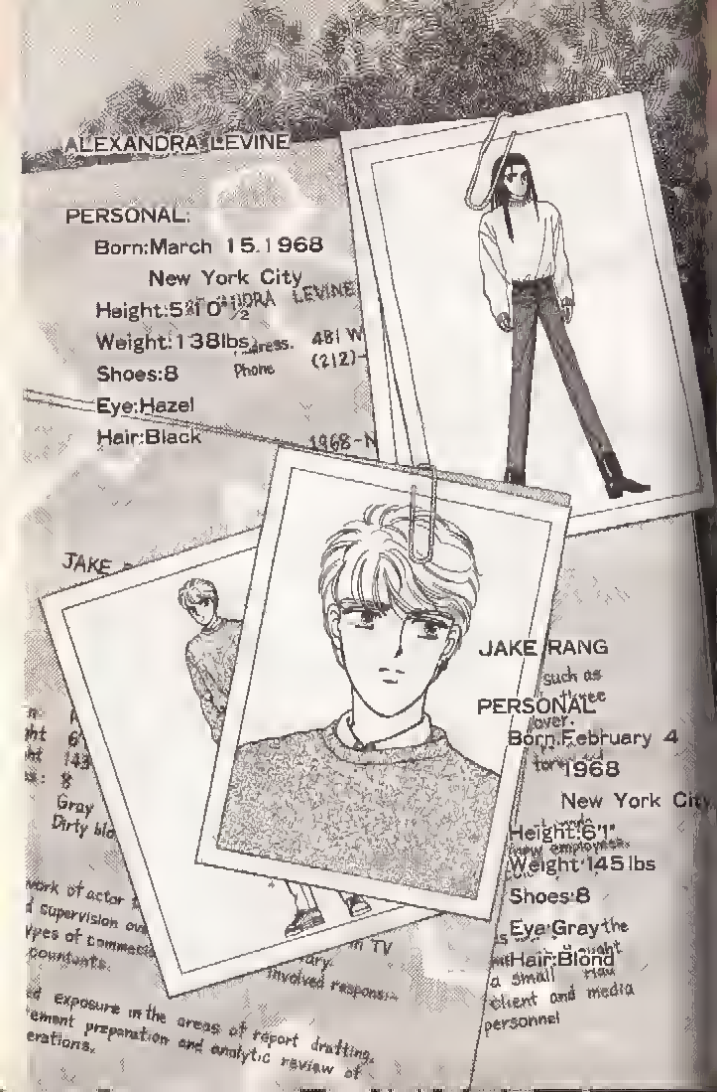
WHACK
TEN BUCKS IT'S A GIRL
HEY, BABY!
.....
AH...
Censored due to foul language.
AND I'LL FIX IT SO YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO @#%& AGAIN.
YOU TRY THAT ONE MORE TIME, BUCKER!

CRASH
Hey, don't be sore.
Okay?
IT'S A GUY.
I'VE GOTTA GO CATCH THAT GUY! SORRY TO RUN.
SEE YOU TOMORROW!
SIVA.
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BE A MODEL?
IT'S LATE. I'LL SEE YOU HOME.
I'VE GOTTA GO, TOO.
OH. THANKS.
Hey!
I WONDER IF WE'LL SEE HIM AGAIN.

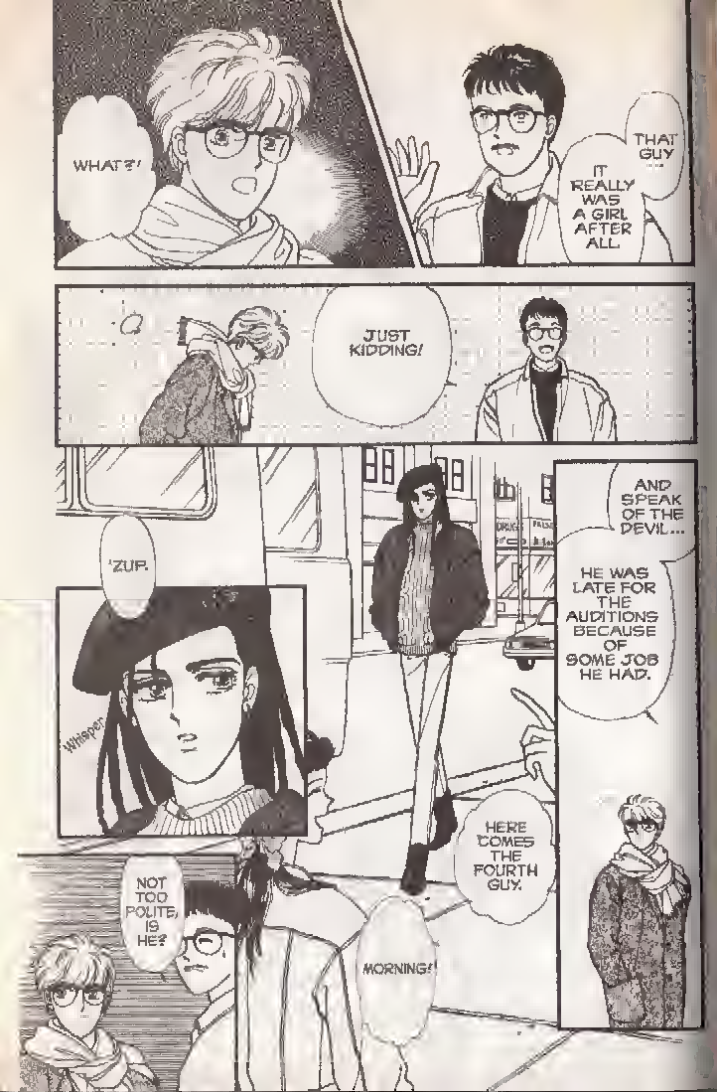

WOW!
NOW HE'S GONNA BE A MODEL?!
A MODEL!
Gosh!
WOW!
HE BREEZED THROUGH THE AUDITION, AND THE PHOTO SHOOT IS THIS WEEKEND.
HE QUIT BEING AN ACTOR! SO WHY IS HE BECOMING A MODEL NOW?!

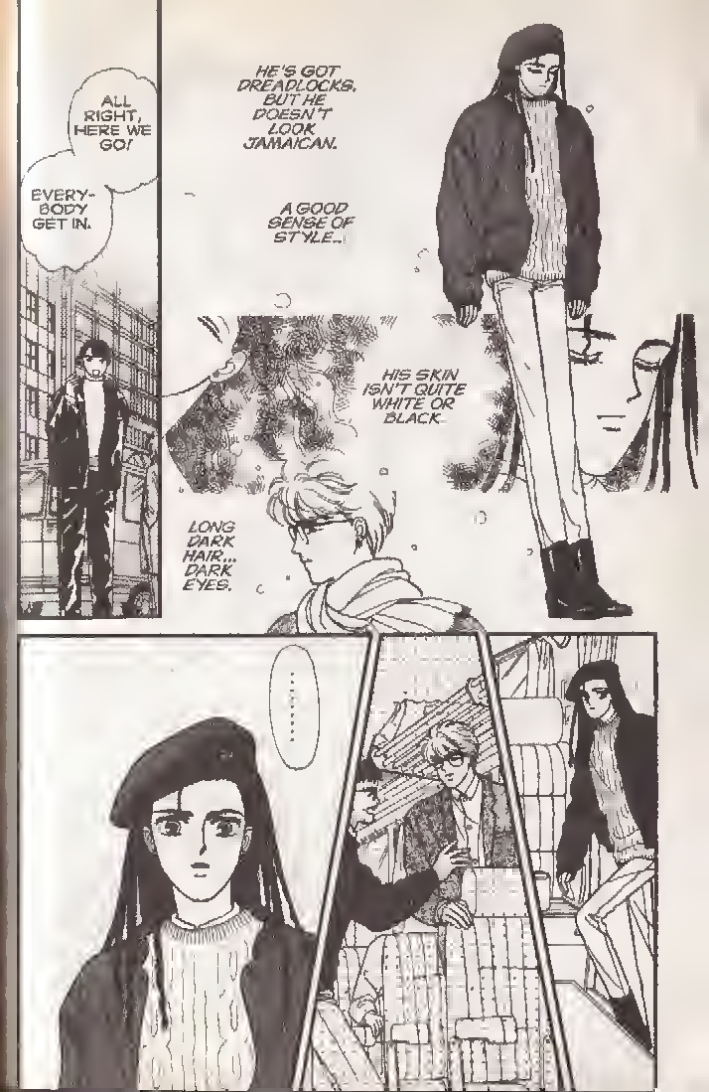
ANY-WAY...
SIVA SAYS HE WANTS TO DO IT.
THAT EDITOR DOESN'T KNOW HE WAS AN ACTOR, DOES HE?
I THINK HE KNOWS.
I NEED SOMETHING THAT WILL TAKE MY MIND OFF THINGS...
I NEED SOME-THING.
ANYTHING.

EVEN JUST LITTLE.
IF IT WILL MAKE ME FEEL BETTER...

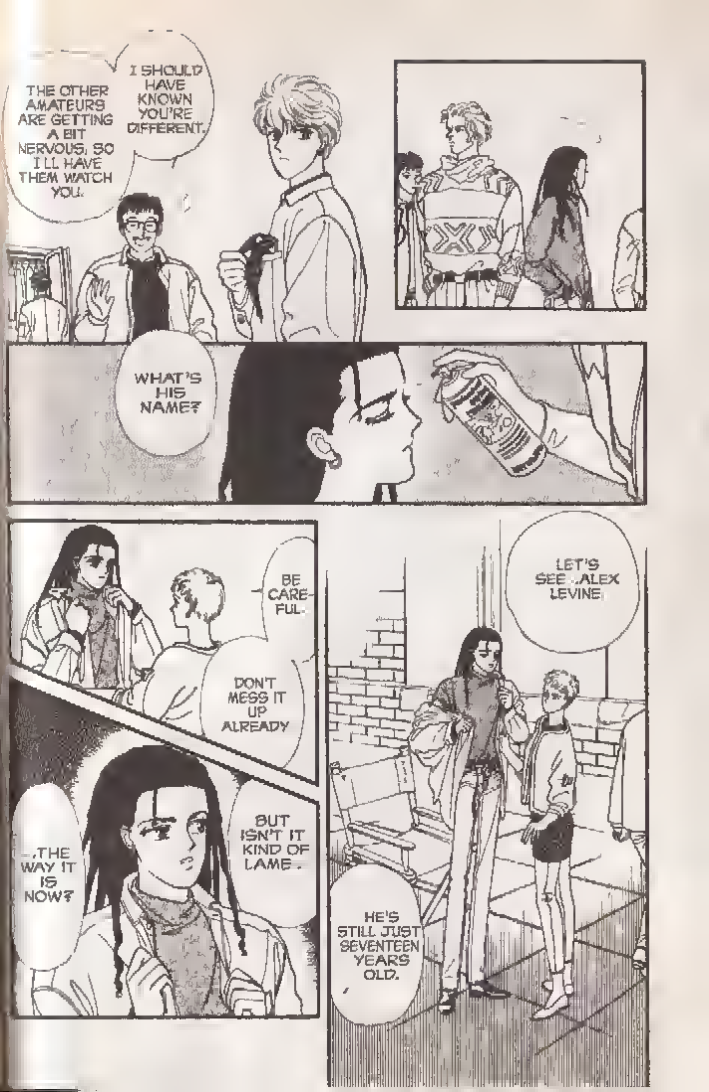

ALEXANDRA LEVINE
PERSONAL:
Born:March 15.1968
New York City
Height:5'10 1/2"
Weight:138lbs
Shoes:8
Eye:Hazel
Hair:Black
JAKE RANG
PERSONAL
Born.February 4
1968
New York City
Height:6'1"
Weight:145lbs
Shoes:8
Eye:Gray
Hair:Blond

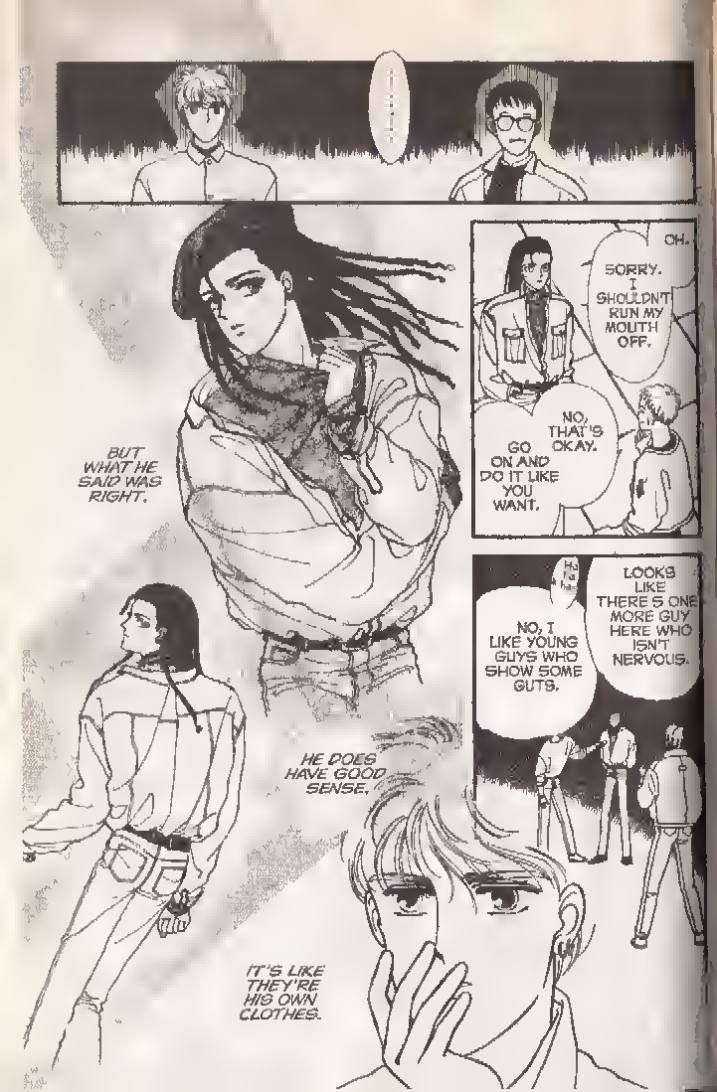
DAMN! ARE WE GOING TO BE ABLE TO GATHER ENOUGH IN TIME?!
SEVEN
HOW MANY WERE SUPPOSED TO COME?!
ONLY TWO MODELS HAVE SHOWED UP SO FAR!
GOOD MORNING.
THAT GUY FROM BEFORE...
I DIDN'T SEE HIM AT THE AUDITION. SO YOU DECIDED TO GO WITH HIM?
YEAH
OH! GOOD MORNING.
THE THIRD ONE'S THERE.


WHAT?!
THAT GUY ... IT REALLY WAS A GIRL AFTER ALL.
JUST KIDDING!
AND SPEAK OF THE DEVIL...
HE WAS LATE FOR THE AUDITIONS BECAUSE OF SOME JOB HE HAD.
'ZUP.
Whisper
HERE COMES THE FOURTH GUY.
NOT TOO POLITE, IS HE?
MORNING!

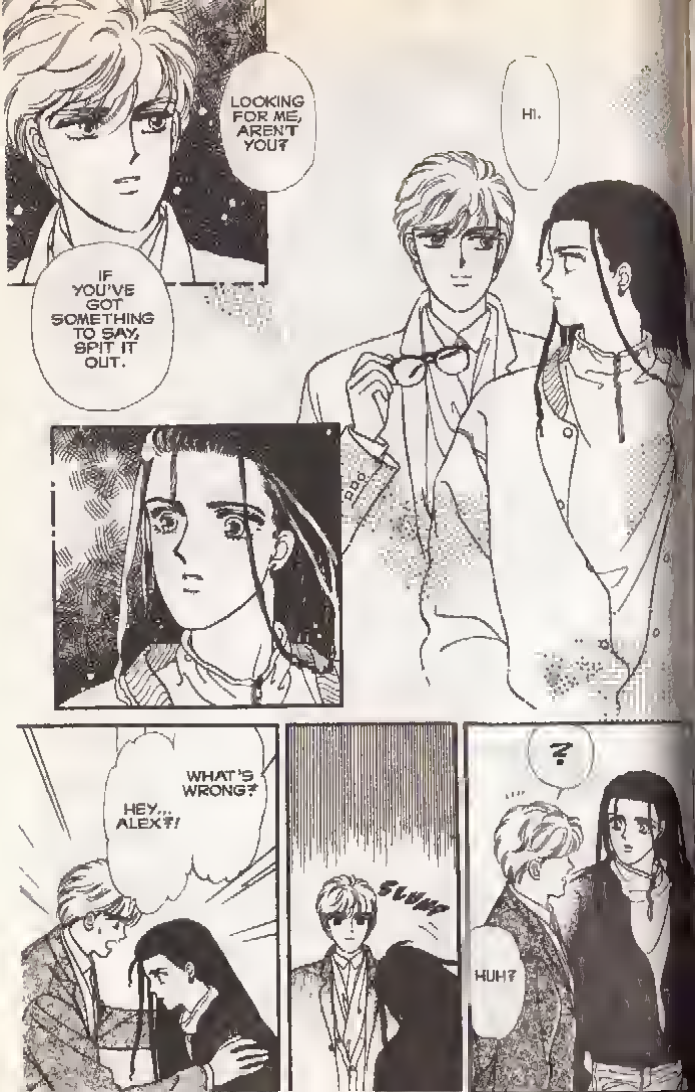

ALL RIGHT, HERE WE GO!
EVERY-BODY GET IN.
HE'S GOT DREADLOCKS, BUT HE DOESN'T LOOK JAMAICAN.
A GOOD SENSE OF STYLE...
HIS SKIN ISN'T QUITE WHITE OR BLACK.
LONG DARK HAIR... DARK EYES.
.....

YEAH, IT'S HIM!
HE'S A NATURAL.
HEY, THAT'S SIVA, ISN'T IT?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
NO... REALLY?!

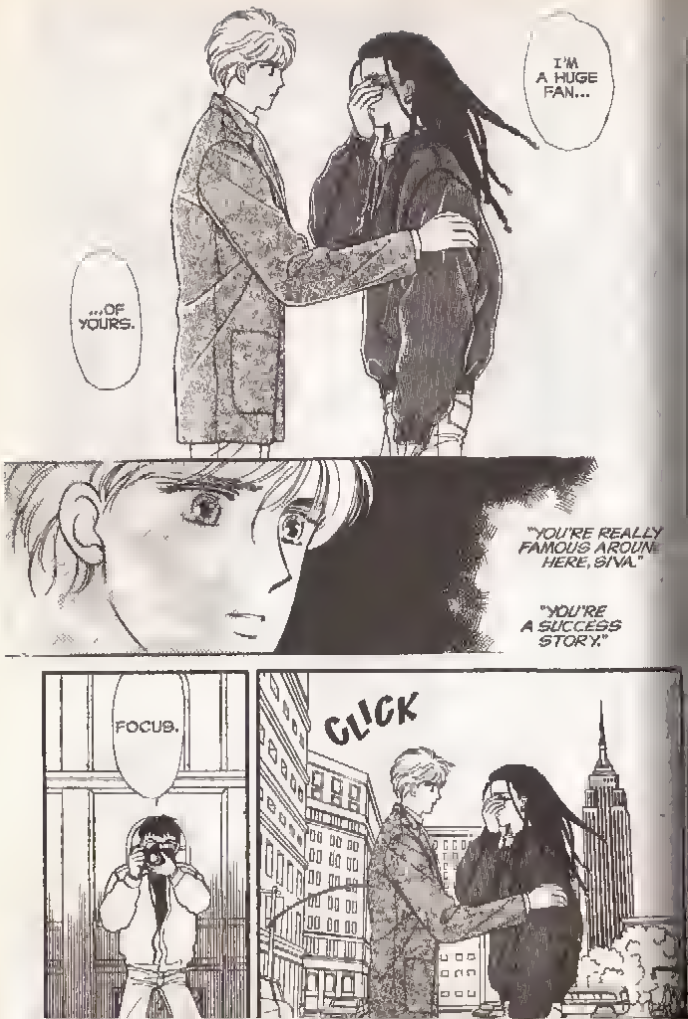

THE OTHER AMATEURS ARE GETTING A BIT NERVOUS, SO I'LL HAVE THEM WATCH YOU.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'RE DIFFERENT.
WHAT'S HIS NAME?
BE CARE-FUL.
DON'T MESS IT UP ALREADY
BUT ISN'T IT KIND OF LAME.
...THE WAY IT IS NOW?
LET'S SEE...ALEX LEVINE.
HE'S STILL JUST SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD.

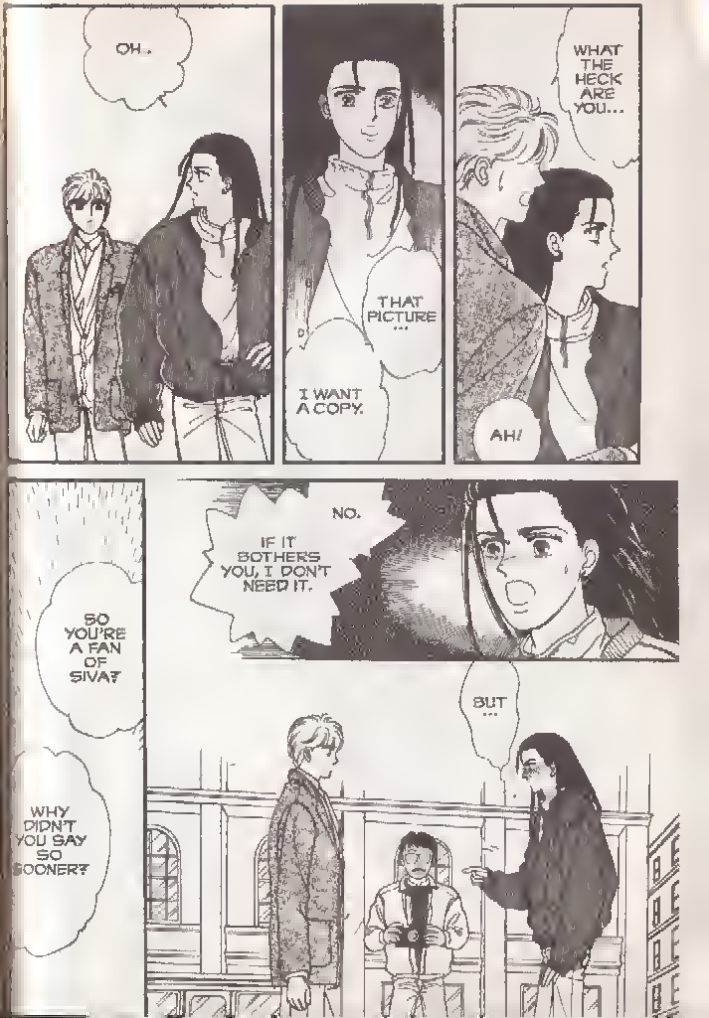

.....
OH.
SORRY. I SHOULDN'T RUN MY MOUTH OFF.
NO, THAT'S OKAY. GO ON AND DO IT LIKE YOU WANT.
BUT WHAT HE SAID WAS RIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S ONE MORE GUY HERE WHO ISN'T NERVOUS.
HO HO
NO, I LIKE YOUNG GUYS WHO SHOW SOME GUTS.
HE DOES HAVE GOOD SENSE.
IT'S LIKE THEY'RE HIS OWN CLOTHES.

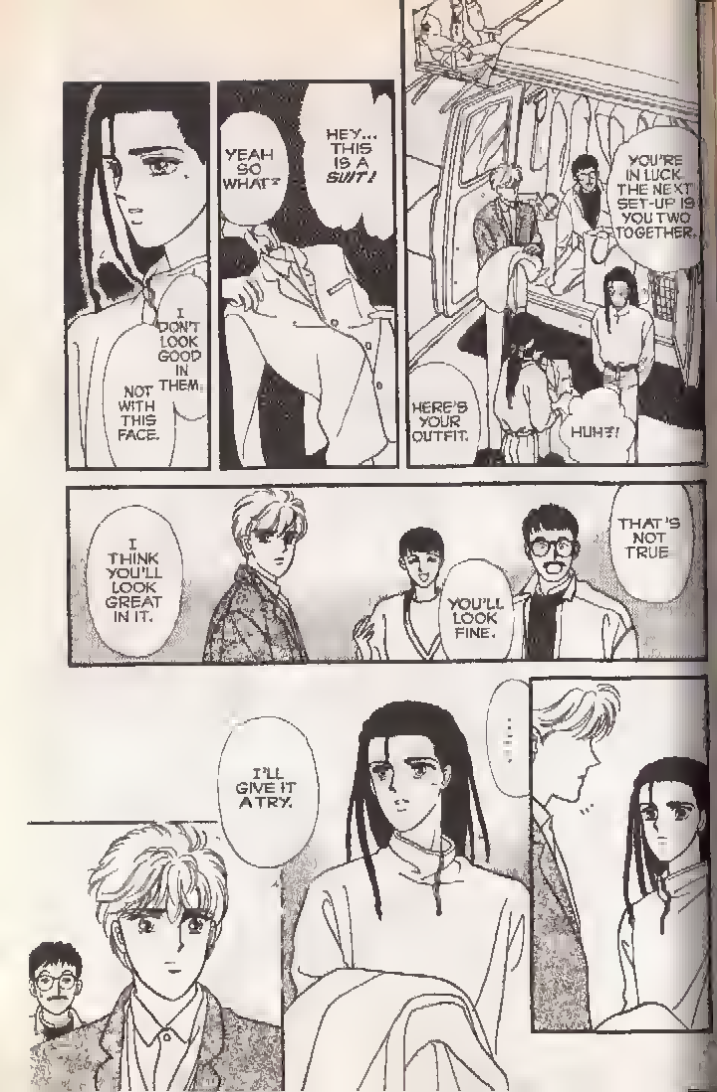
TURN
GLANCE
LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE?
.....
Lighting is good.

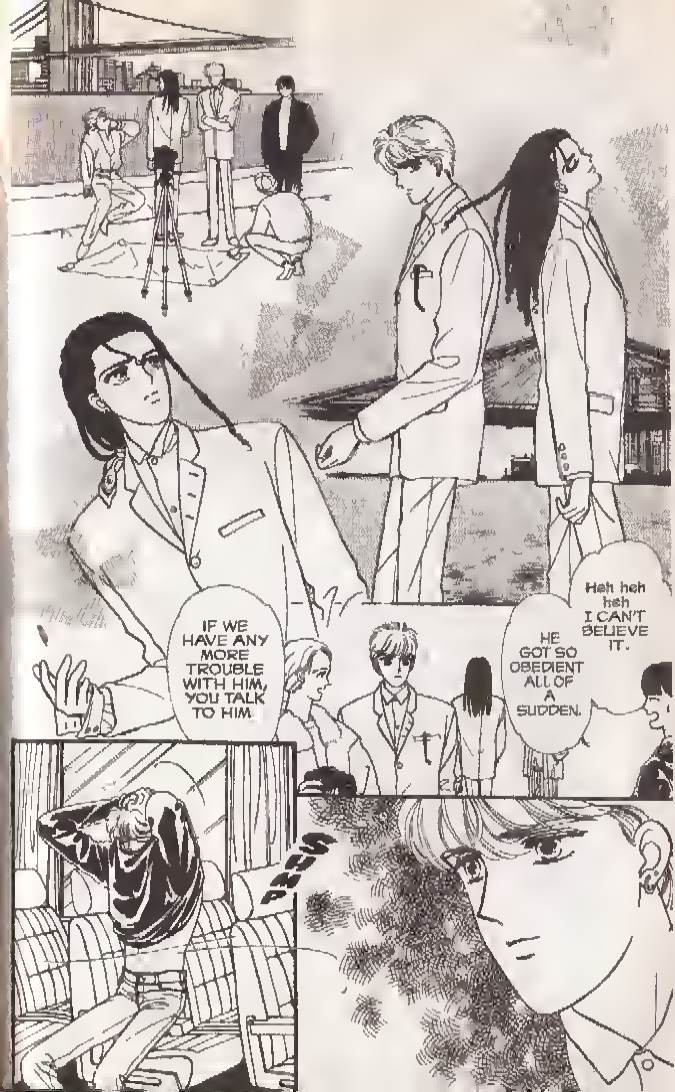

LOOKING FOR ME, AREN'T YOU?
IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, SPIT IT OUT.
HI.
WHAT'S WRONG?
HEY... ALEX?!
SLUMP
?
HUH?

BLUSH
AH!
S-SORRY!
CLACK
AAGH!
SORRY
I'M... A LITTLE NERVOUS
UH...
DIVA


I'M A HUGE FAN...
...OF YOURS.
"YOU'RE REALLY FAMOUS AROUND HERE, SIVA."
"YOU'RE A SUCCESS STORY."
FOCUS.
CLICK

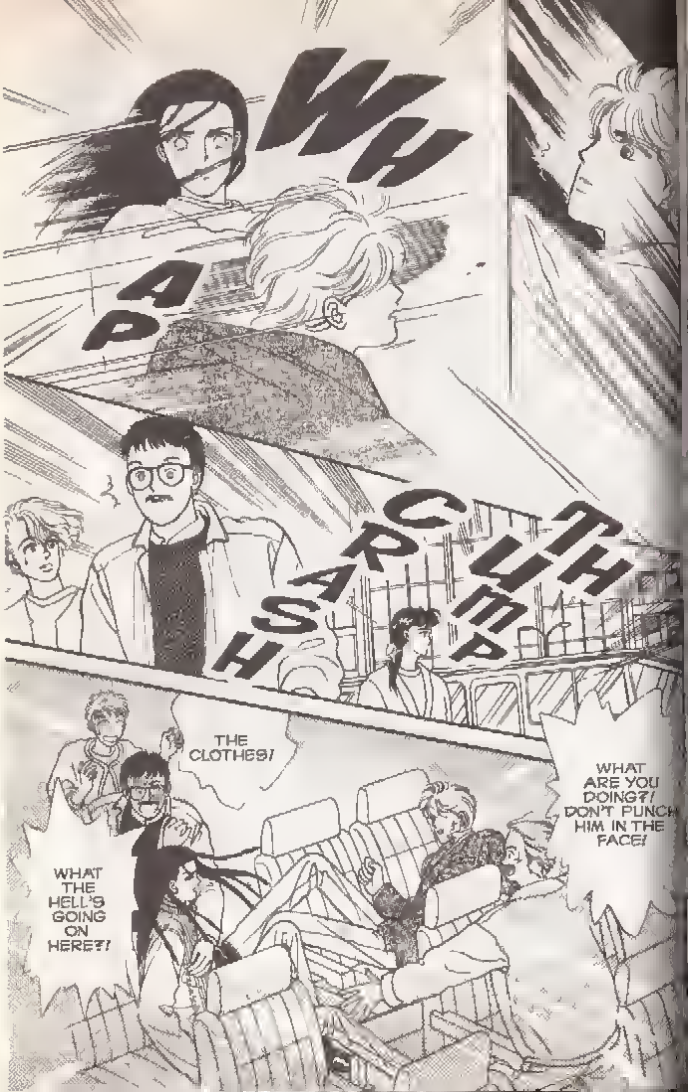

OH.
THAT PICTURE ...
I WANT A COPY.
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU...
AH!
NO.
IF IT BOTHERS YOU, I DON'T NEED IT.
BUT ...
SO YOU'RE A FAN OF SIVA?
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO SOONER?

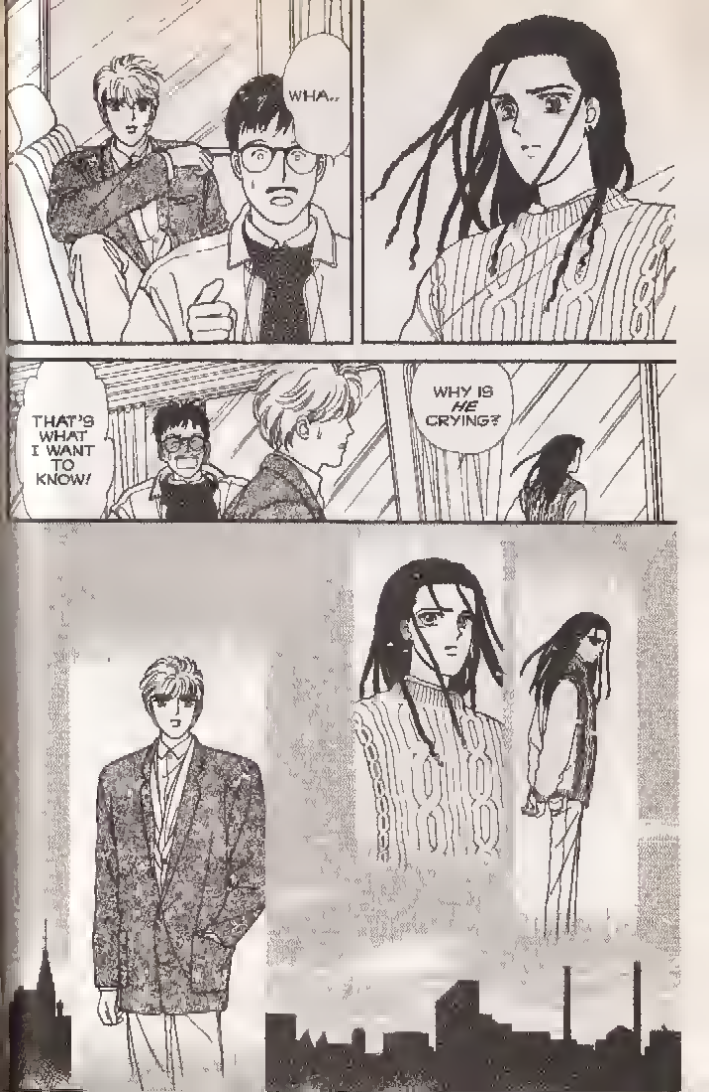

HUH?!
HERE'S YOUR OUTFIT.
YOU'RE IN LUCK. THE NEXT SET-UP IS YOU TWO TOGETHER.
HEY... THIS IS A SUIT!
YEAH SO WHAT?
I DON'T LOOK GOOD IN THEM. NOT WITH THIS FACE.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
YOU'LL LOOK FINE.
I THINK YOU'LL LOOK GREAT IN IT.
...
I'LL GIVE IT A TRY.


IF WE HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLE WITH HIM, YOU TALK TO HIM.
HE GOT SO OBEDIENT ALL OF A SUDDEN.
Heh heh heh I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
SIGH

SORRY, BUT...
...WOULD YOU CLOSE THE DOOR, PLEASE?
YES, BOSS.
OH, SORRY. I DIDN'T SEE IT WAS YOU.
IS THERE ANY-THING ELSE YOU NEED?
UH..
HOLD ON A SEC.
"DON" OR "CHIEF" SOUND'S LIKE A STREET GANG.
BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE GUYS
WELL... THAT'S WHAT EVERYBODY USUALLY CALLED YOU.
ME? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WHAT'S WITH THE "BOSS" STUFF?
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN.

I'M NOT AS SPECIAL AS YOU THINK.
YOU GIVE ME TOO MUCH CREDIT.
I'M NOTHING LIKE THE TOUGH, COLD-BLOODED SIVA YOU IMAGINE.
I'M JUST AN ORDINARY GUY, LIKE PEOPLE EVERY-WHERE
I'M JUST A...
BUT IT'S THE TRUTH.
STOP IT. DON'T TALK LIKE THAT.


WHAP
THUMP
CRASH
THE CLOTHES!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! DON'T PUNCH HIM IN THE FACE!
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?!


WHA...
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO KNOW!
WHY IS *HE* CRYING?

THE GIRLS WHO READ SHOJO MANGA ARE GOING CRAZY FOR ALEX, BUT THE ONES WHO DON'T READ SHOJO AND THE ADULTS PREFER HAL.

PERSONALLY, I THINK BOTH HAVE THEIR DIFFERENT CHARMS, AND I FEEL LIKE I'M WRITING TWO SEPARATE SERIES AT ONCE. HAL'S PLACE IS ACTUALLY MY COUSIN'S HOUSE IN L.A. HIS IS DIRTIER THAN THE REAL THING, BUT THERE REALLY ARE TWIN PALM TREES GROWING OUT IN FRONT. THESE TWO CHARACTERS ARE SO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. IF CIPHER AND SIVA BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER, WHAT KIND OF CONVERSATION WOULD THEY HAVE?

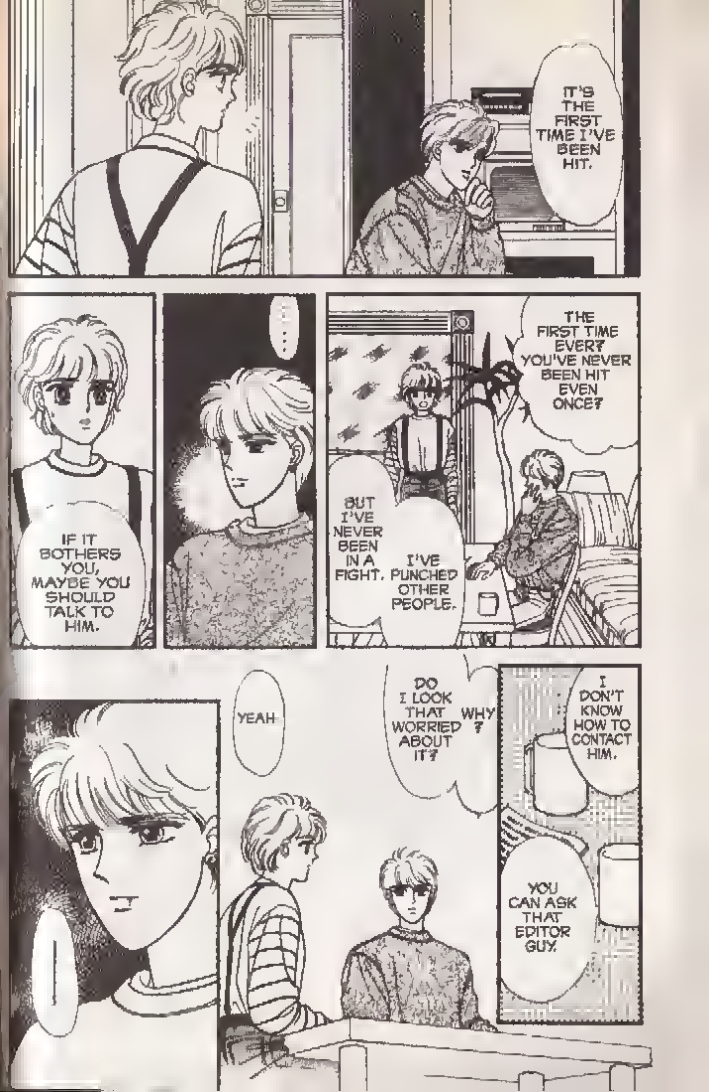
WOW.

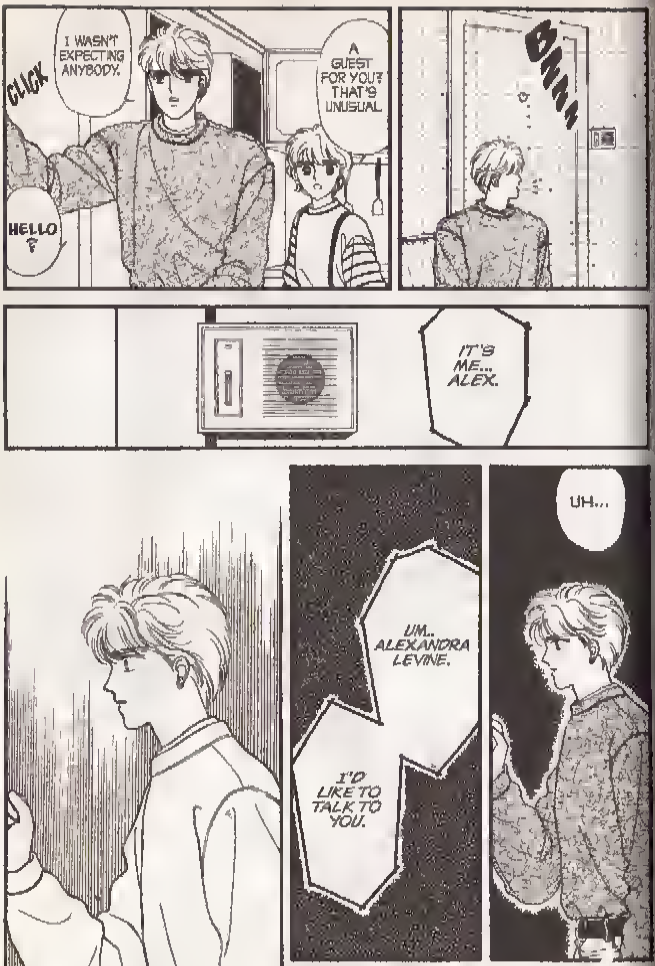
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A DISASTER.

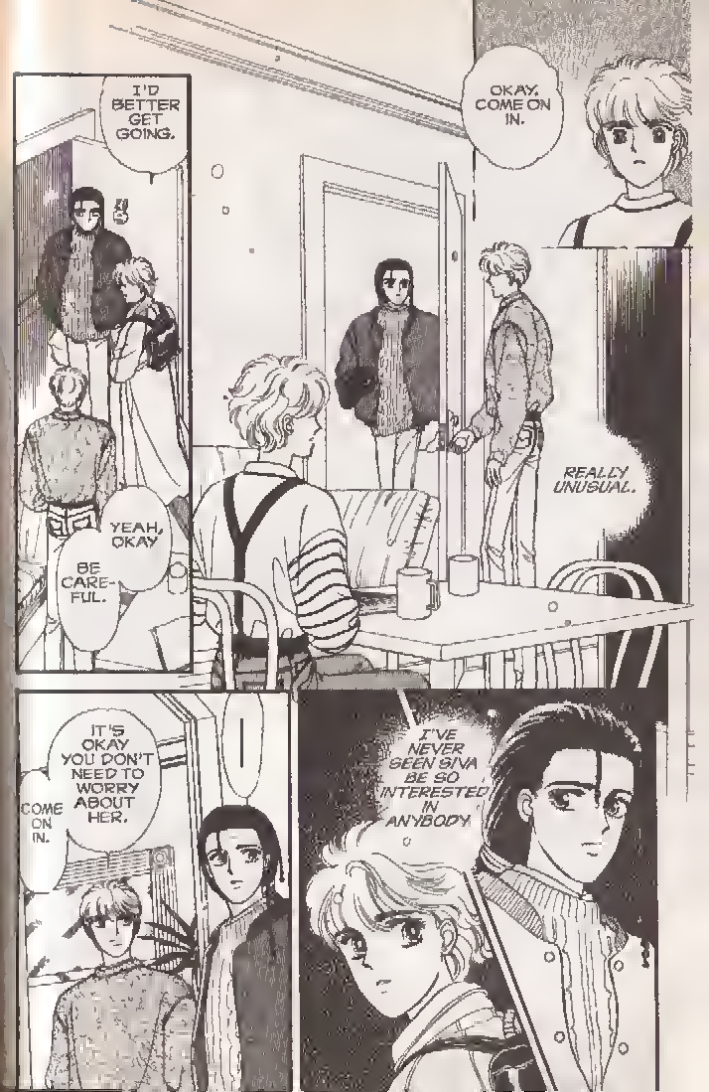
I JUST CUT MY LIP. IT WASN'T EXACTLY A DISASTER.

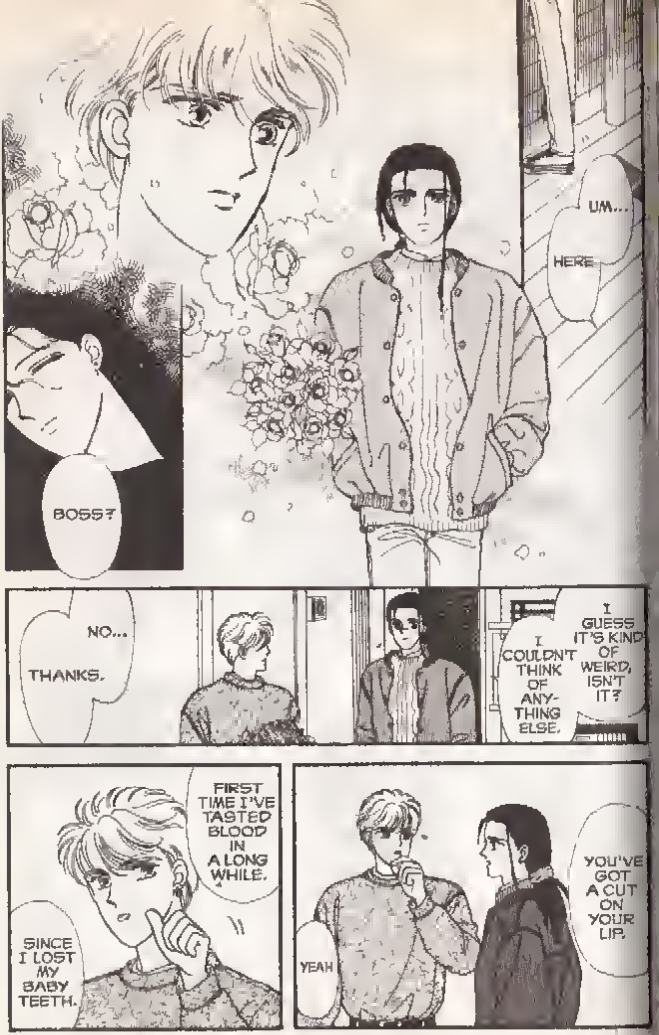
EVEN SO...

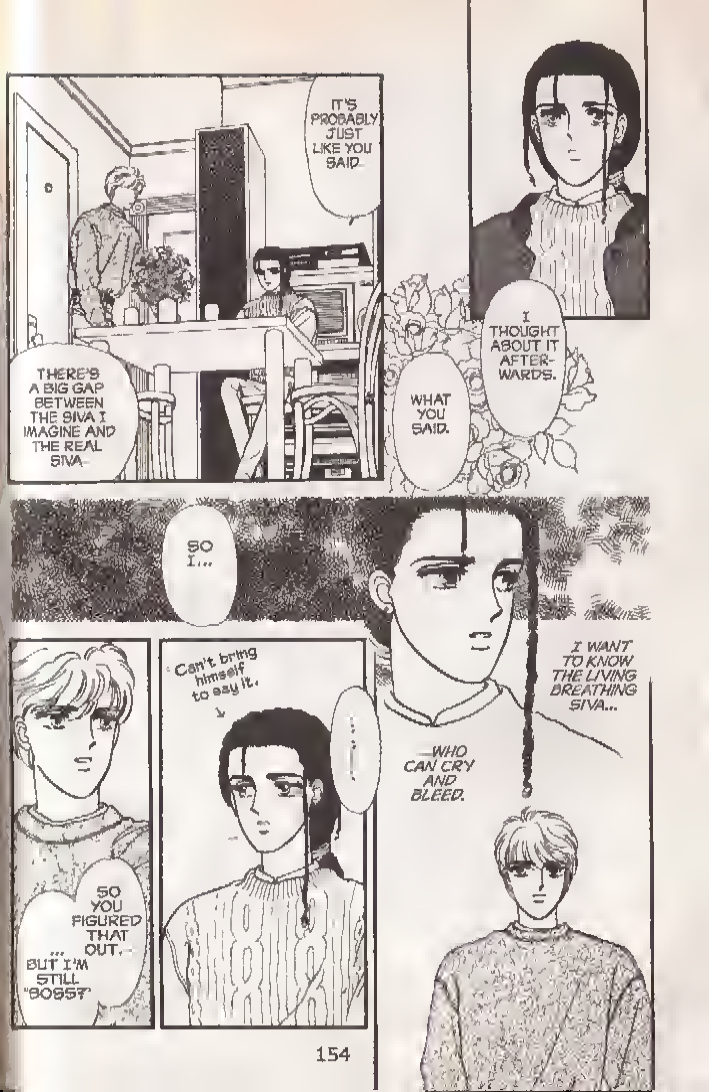
WHAT A HOT-HEAD.

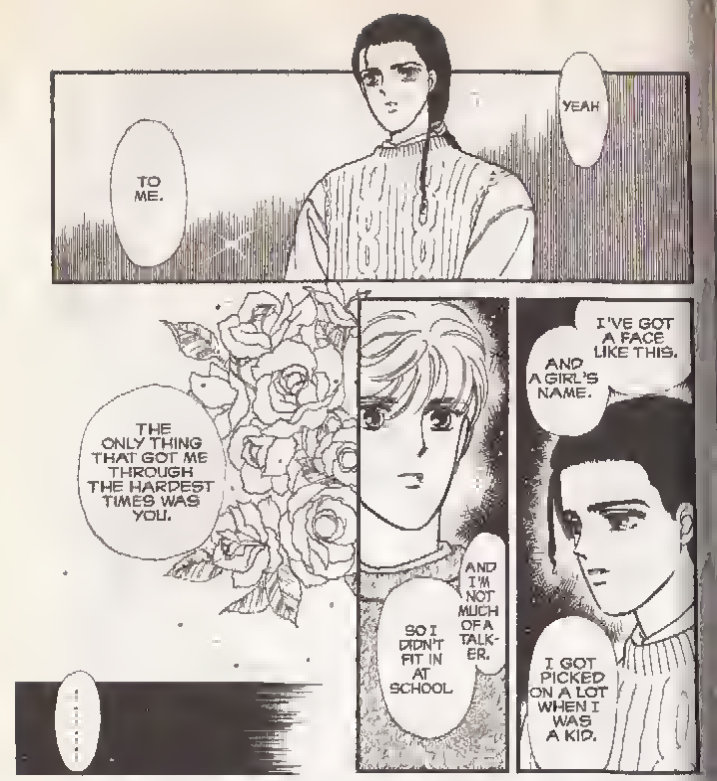

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN HIT.
THE FIRST TIME EVER? YOU'VE NEVER BEEN HIT EVEN ONCE?
BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN IN A FIGHT.
I'VE PUNCHED OTHER PEOPLE.
...
IF IT BOTHERS YOU, MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO HIM.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO CONTACT HIM.
YOU CAN ASK THAT EDITOR GUY.
DO I LOOK THAT WORRIED ABOUT IT?
WHY?
YEAH.
...

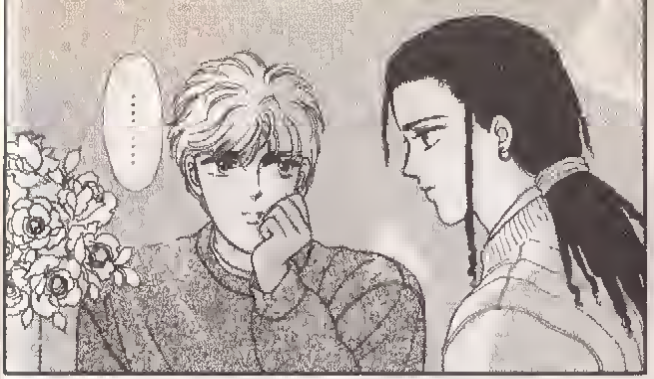

I WASN'T EXPECTING ANYBODY.
CLICK
HELLO?
A GUEST FOR YOU? THAT'S UNUSUAL.
BRRRR
IT'S ME... ALEX.
UM... ALEXANDRA LEVINE.
I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU.
UH...


I'D BETTER GET GOING.
OKAY, COME ON IN.
YEAH, OKAY
BE CARE-FUL.
REALLY UNUSUAL.
IT'S OKAY YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT HER.
COME ON IN.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SIVA BE SO INTERESTED IN ANYBODY


BOSS?
UM...
HERE.
NO...
THANKS.
I COULDN'T THINK OF ANY-THING ELSE.
I GUESS IT'S KIND OF WEIRD, ISN'T IT?
FIRST TIME I'VE TASTED BLOOD IN A LONG WHILE.
SINCE I LOST MY BABY TEETH.
YEAH
YOU'VE GOT A CUT ON YOUR LIP.


IT'S PROBABLY JUST LIKE YOU SAID.
THERE'S A BIG GAP BETWEEN THE SIVA I IMAGINE AND THE REAL SIVA.
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT AFTER-WARDS.
WHAT YOU SAID.
SO I...
I WANT TO KNOW THE LIVING BREATHING SIVA...
—WHO CAN CRY AND BLEED.
Can't bring himself to say it.
SO YOU FIGURED THAT OUT.
... BUT I'M STILL "BOSS"


YEAH
TO ME.
I'VE GOT A FACE LIKE THIS.
AND A GIRL'S NAME.
I GOT PICKED ON A LOT WHEN I WAS A KID.
AND I'M NOT MUCH OF A TALK-ER.
SO I DIDN'T FIT IN AT SCHOOL.
THE ONLY THING THAT GOT ME THROUGH THE HARDEST TIMES WAS YOU.
DAMN IT.
I JUST CAN'T SAY IT RIGHT.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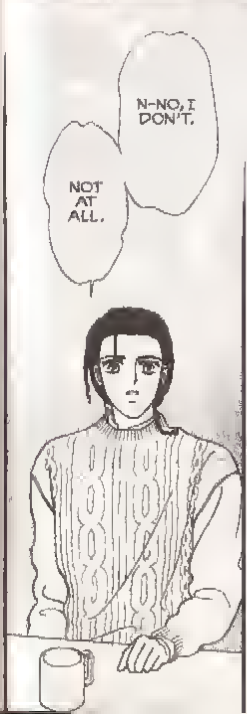
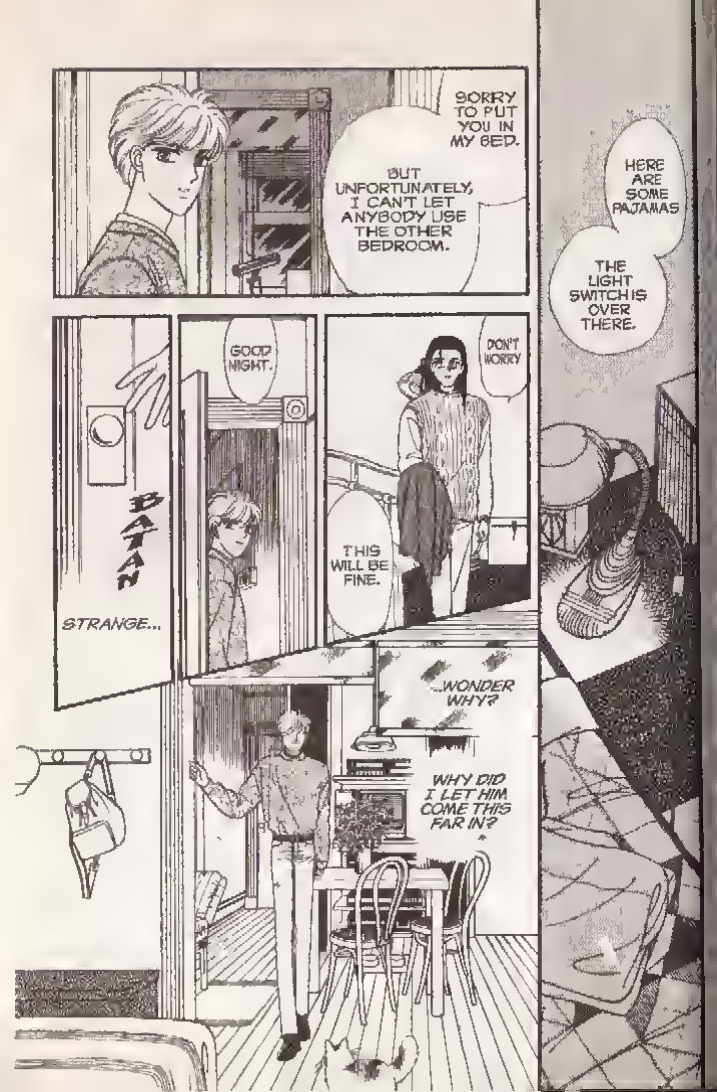
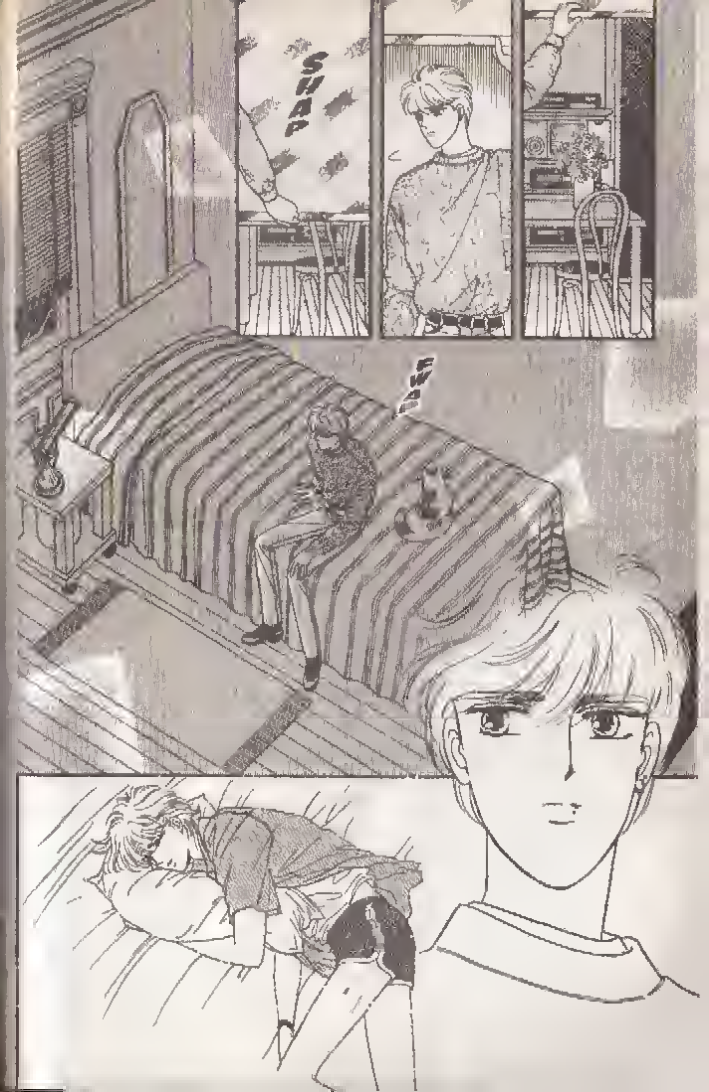

N-NO, I DON'T.
NOT AT ALL.

.....
HUH ?!

STAY HERE TONIGHT

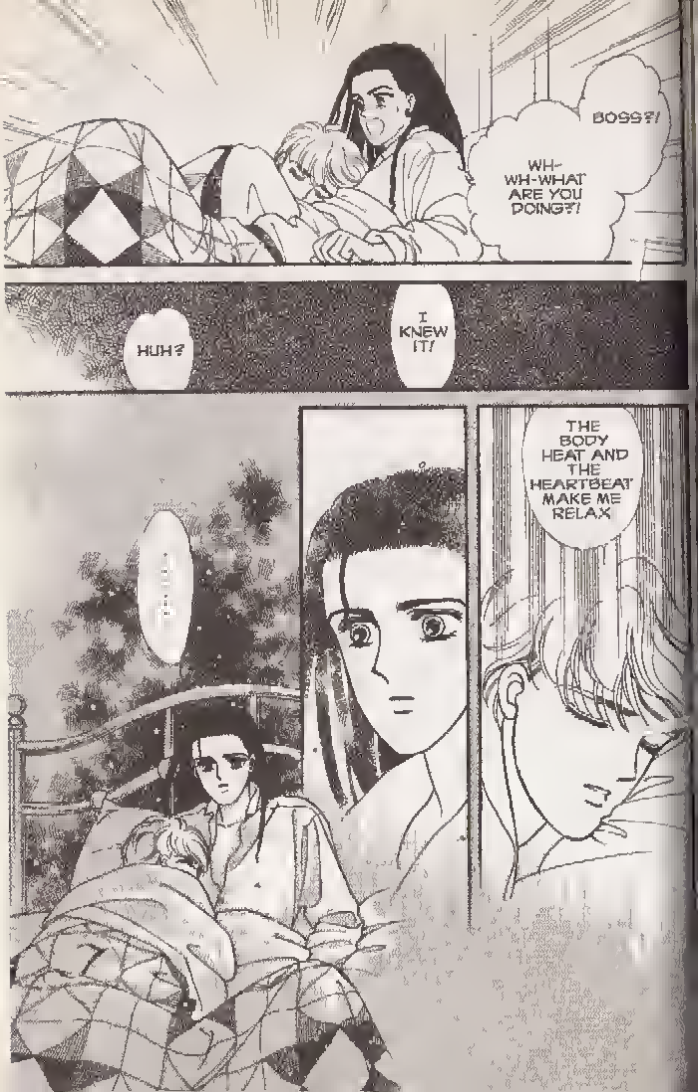
IT'S ALREADY LATE AND TOMORROW IS SUNDAY.
UNLESS YOU HAVE SOME-THING ELSE TO DO, THAT IS.


SORRY TO PUT YOU IN MY BED.
BUT UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T LET ANYBODY USE THE OTHER BEDROOM.
HERE ARE SOME PAJAMAS
THE LIGHT SWITCH IS OVER THERE.
GOOD NIGHT.
DON'T WORRY
THIS WILL BE FINE.
BATAN
STRANGE...
..WONDER WHY?
WHY DID I LET HIM COME THIS FAR IN?


SWAP
SWAP

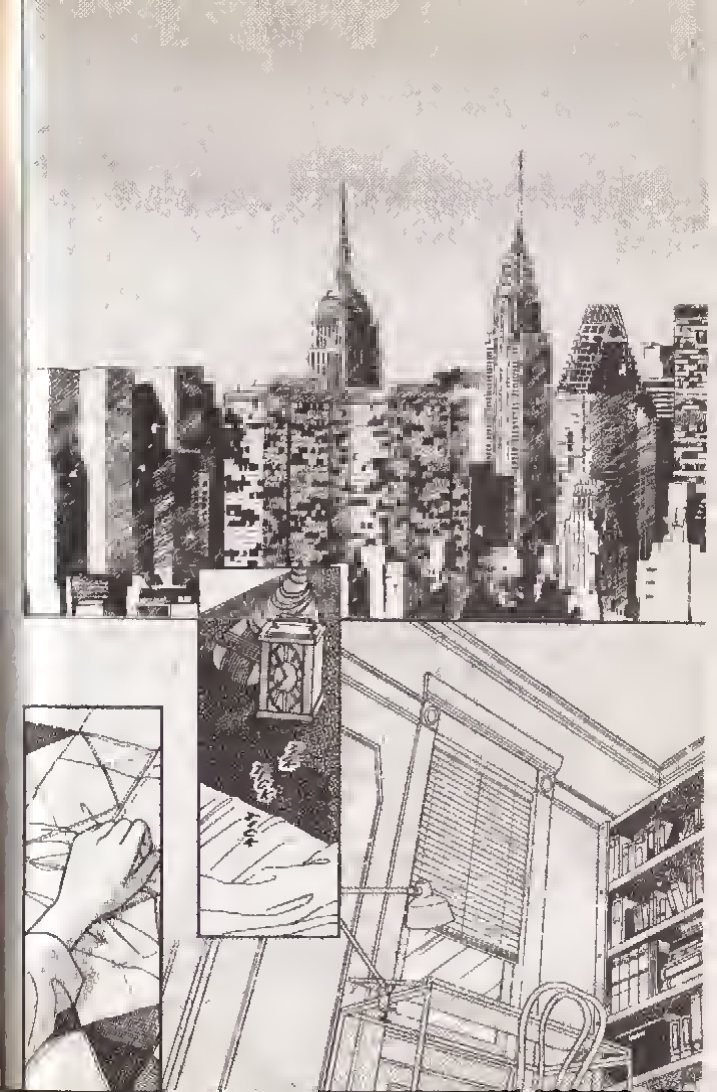
KACHAK

STILL AWAKE?
UH... YEAH
GUESS I'M NOT USED TO IT. TO THAT OTHER ROOM.
OH, OKAY! WE CAN SWITCH!
GRAB
PAT
WHAT THE ...?!

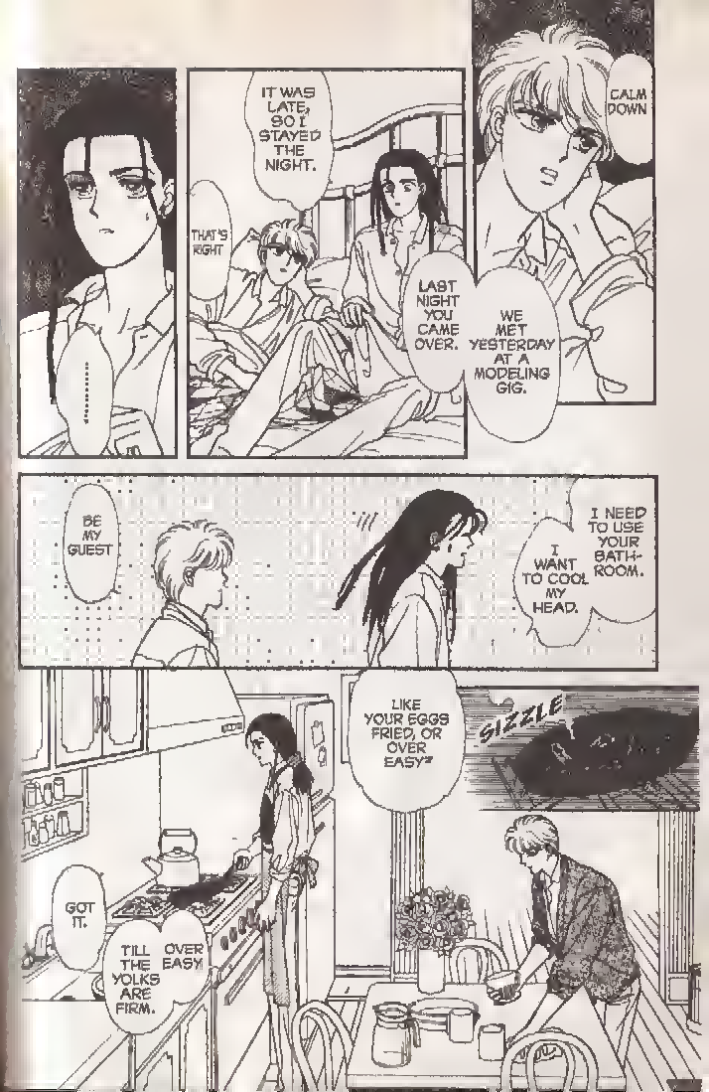

BOSS?!
WH-WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I KNEW IT!
HUH?
THE BODY HEAT AND THE HEARTBEAT MAKE ME RELAX
...

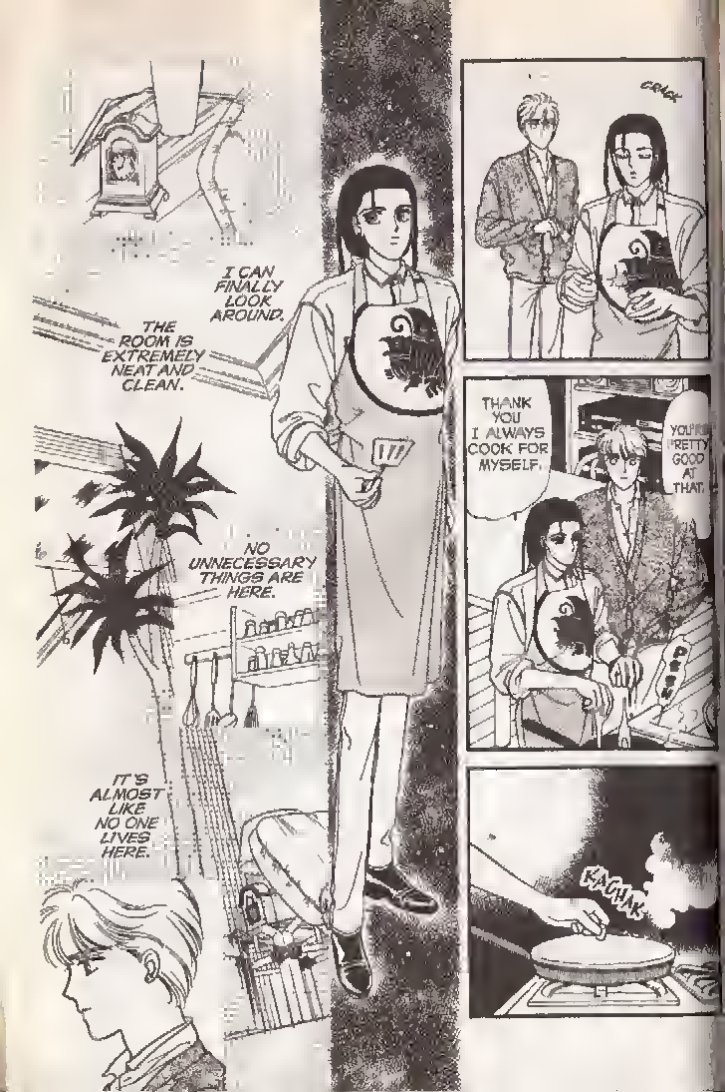
IT'S THE REAL HIM.
THIS IS REALITY.

ONE FEELING CAN DETERMINE YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.
SHOULD WE BE ANGRY... OR GRATE-FUL?
SOME-TIMES IT SEEMS LIKE GOD IS MOVING ONE OF THE GAME PIECES.
THE VARIOUS OCCURRENCES - THE - STRANGE COINCIDENCES - THAT HAPPEN IN OUR LIVES.

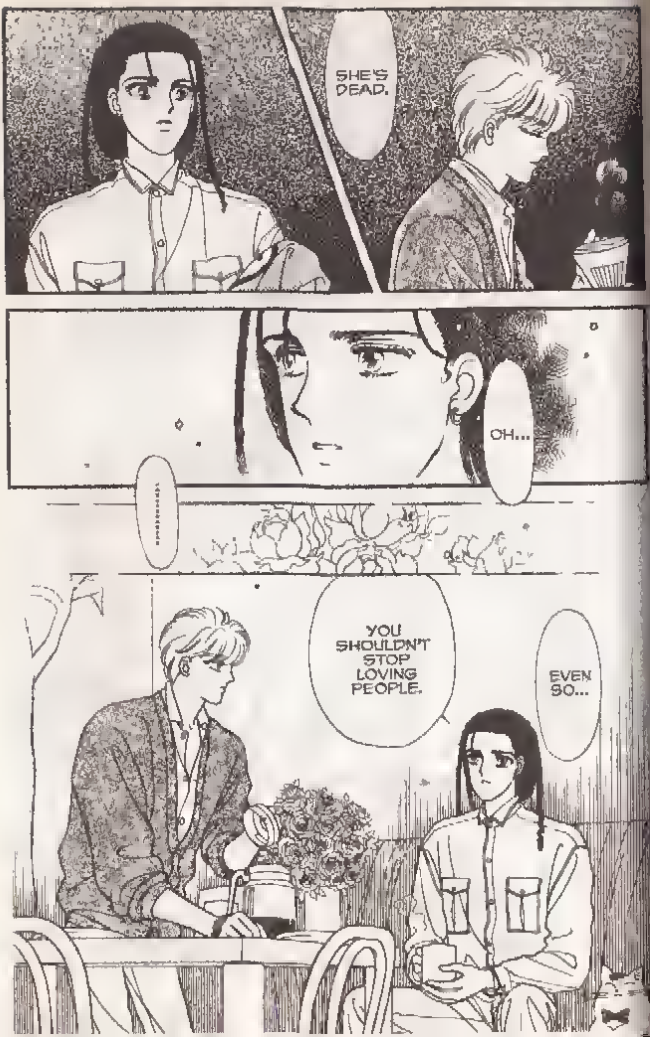


OW...
MMM
MMM
GYAH!
GOOD MORNING


CALM DOWN
WE MET YESTERDAY AT A MODELING GIG.
LAST NIGHT YOU CAME OVER.
IT WAS LATE, SO I STAYED THE NIGHT.
THAT'S RIGHT
.....
I NEED TO USE YOUR BATH-ROOM.
I WANT TO COOL MY HEAD.
BE MY GUEST
SIZZLE
LIKE YOUR EGGS FRIED, OR OVER EASY?
GOT IT.
TILL OVER EASY YOLKS ARE FIRM.

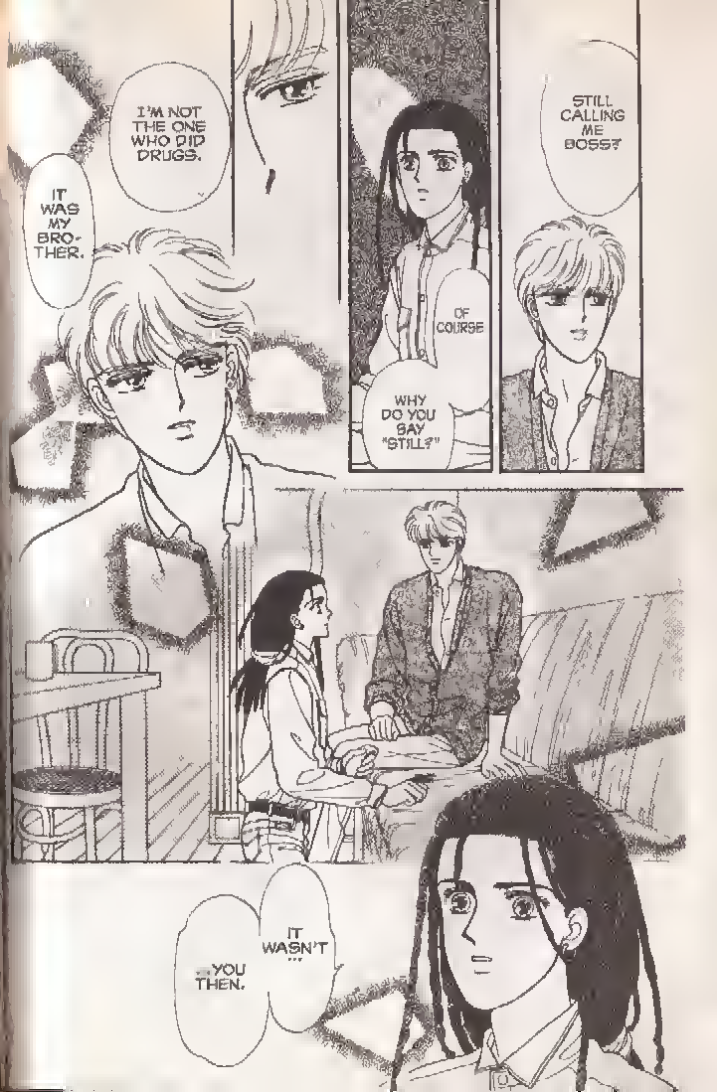

I CAN FINALLY LOOK AROUND.
THE ROOM IS EXTREMELY NEAT AND CLEAN.
NO UNNECESSARY THINGS ARE HERE.
IT'S ALMOST LIKE NO ONE LIVES HERE.
CRACK
THANK YOU I ALWAYS COOK FOR MYSELF.
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THAT.
KA-CHAK

I KEPT TALKING ABOUT VARIOUS THINGS UNTIL I WAS SURE YOU WERE COMPLETELY ASLEEP.
OH... THEN THAT PROBABLY WASN'T A DREAM.
YEAH. I HAD GOOD DREAMS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG WHILE.
LIKE I COULD HEAR GOD
DID YOU SLEEP WELL LAST NIGHT?
.....
UH-HUH.
THIS MORNING, YOU WOKE UP BEFORE ME, DIDN'T YOU?
R-RARE?
YOU GOT A GIRL-FRIEND, DON'T YOU?
IT'S RARE I HAVE SOMEBODY NEXT TO ME.
START
THERE'S A GIRL I LIKE, BUT...
DOESN'T SHE LIKE YOU?
I WATCHED YOUR SLEEPING FACE FOR A WHILE.
POUR


SHE'S DEAD.
OH...
YOU SHOULDN'T STOP LOVING PEOPLE.
EVEN SO...

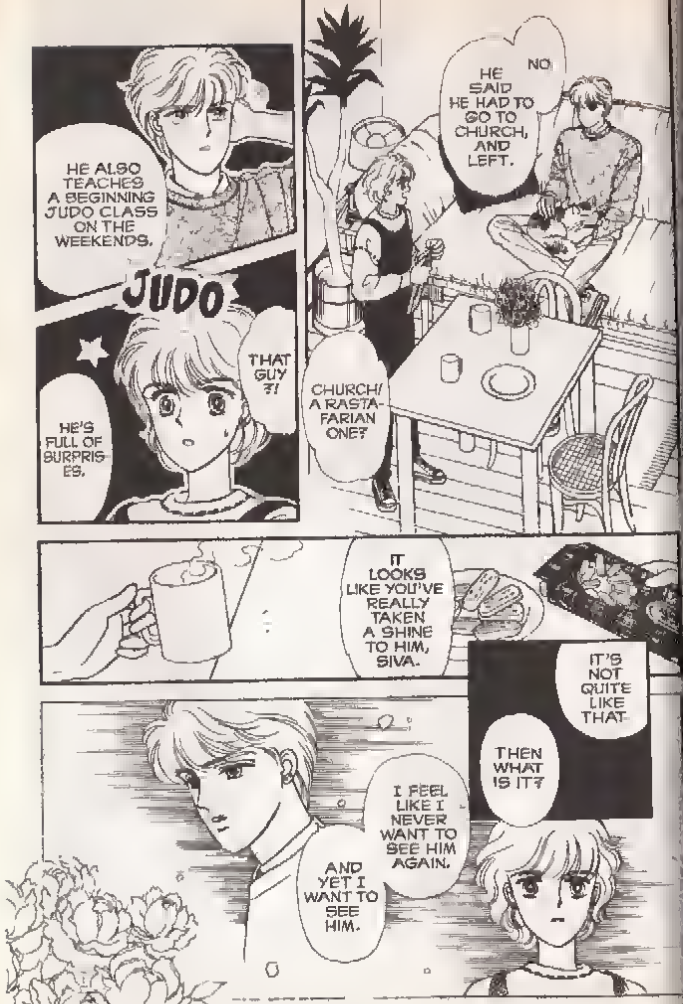
YOU SOUND LIKE AN OLD LADY.
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME!
IF YOU TAKE STUFF LIKE THIS LIGHTLY NOW, YOU'LL REGRET IT!
EVERY-ONE SAYS THAT THEY'RE FLEETING AND UNRELI-ABLE...
BUT IN REALITY, THERE'S NOTHING SO UNBUDGABLE AND STUBBORN AS HUMAN FEELINGS!
.....
IS SOME-THING FUNNY?
SIGH
I DON'T LIKE BEING PREACHED TO.
WHA...?!

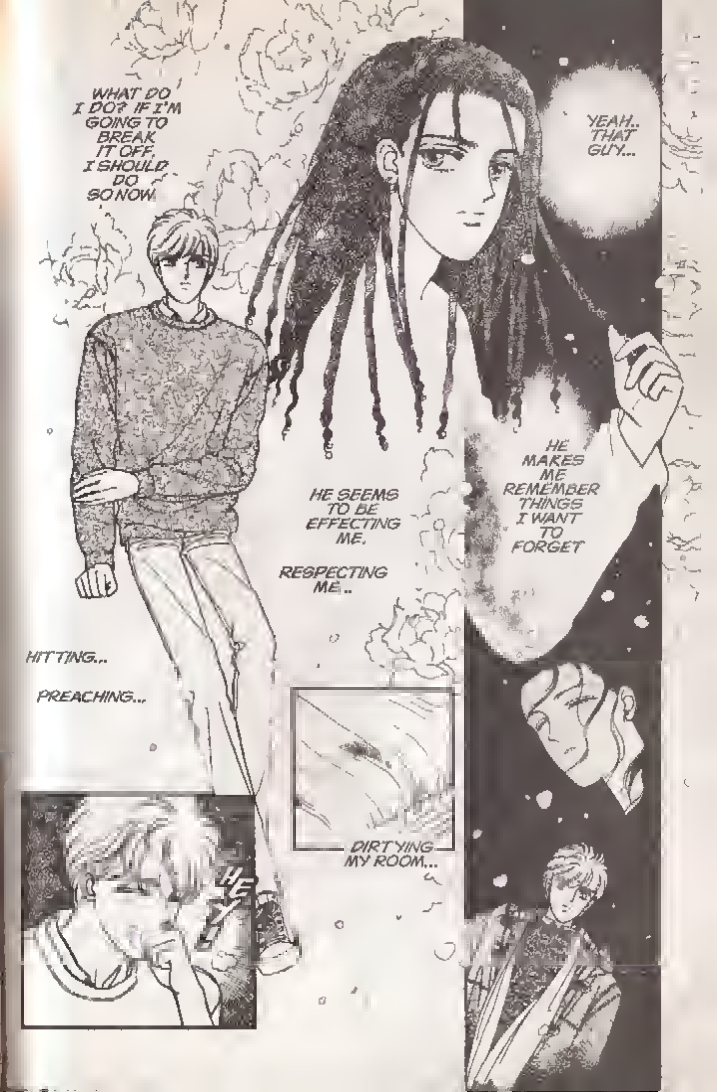
GAH!
SNAG
I'M NOT PREACHING!
YOU JUST ..
OW OW OW OW OW!
ELLIE! CUT IT OUT!
OH NO!
SORRY! I SPILLED THE COFFEE!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.
IT'S MY CAT'S FAULT, NOT YOURS.
BUT ...
I'M REALLY SORRY, BOSS.


I'M NOT THE ONE WHO DID DRUGS.
IT WAS MY BRO-THER.
STILL CALLING ME BOSS?
OF COURSE
WHY DO YOU SAY "STILL?"
IT WASN'T ...
YOU THEN.

AH!
BUT...
THE SCRIPT BASED ON THE IRWIN SHAW BOOK--THAT WON THE NATIONAL STUDENT WRITING CONTEST...
--THAT WAS *YOU*, WASN'T IT?
HE ISN'T IN NEW YORK ANY-MORE.
SORRY I CAN'T INTRO-DUCE YOU TO HIM.
I LIKE TO WRITE THINGS MYSELF.
HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?
YOU CONTRIBUTE TO MAGAZINES SOMETIMES, DON'T YOU?

UH...
SO DID HE STAY AFTER THAT?
UM...
YOUR WRITING
I LIKE IT.


HE ALSO TEACHES A BEGINNING JUDO CLASS ON THE WEEKENDS.
JUDO
THAT GUY?!
HE'S FULL OF SURPRISES.
CHURCH? A RASTAFARIAN ONE?
NO. HE SAID HE HAD TO GO TO CHURCH, AND LEFT.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE REALLY TAKEN A SHINE TO HIM, SIVA.
IT'S NOT QUITE LIKE THAT.
THEN WHAT IS IT?
I FEEL LIKE I NEVER WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN.
AND YET I WANT TO SEE HIM.


WHAT DO I DO? IF I'M GOING TO BREAK IT OFF, I SHOULD DO SO NOW.
YEAH.. THAT GUY...
HE MAKES ME REMEMBER THINGS I WANT TO FORGET
HE SEEMS TO BE EFFECTING ME.
RESPECTING ME..
HITTING...
PREACHING...
DIRTYING MY ROOM...
HE

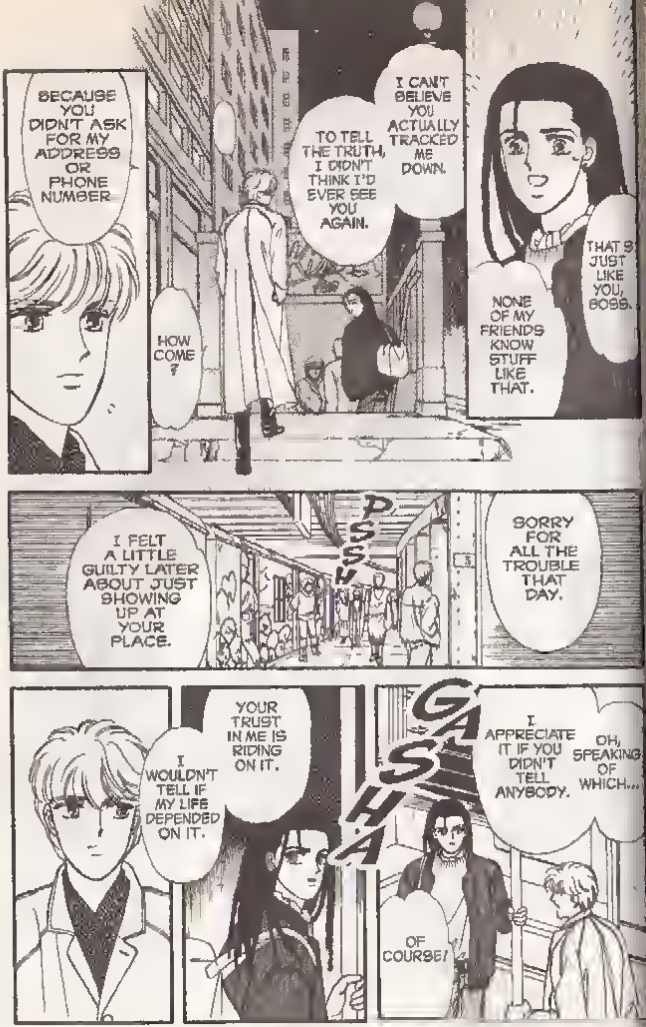
THIS MAY I TOOK MY THIRD TRIP TO NEW YORK. OF COURSE IT WAS A RESEARCH TRIP BUT THIS TIME WAS A LITTLE SPECIAL. I WAS RESEARCHING FOR THE CIPHER ANIME VIDEO, COMING OUT NEXT SPRING.

CIPHER THE VIDEO

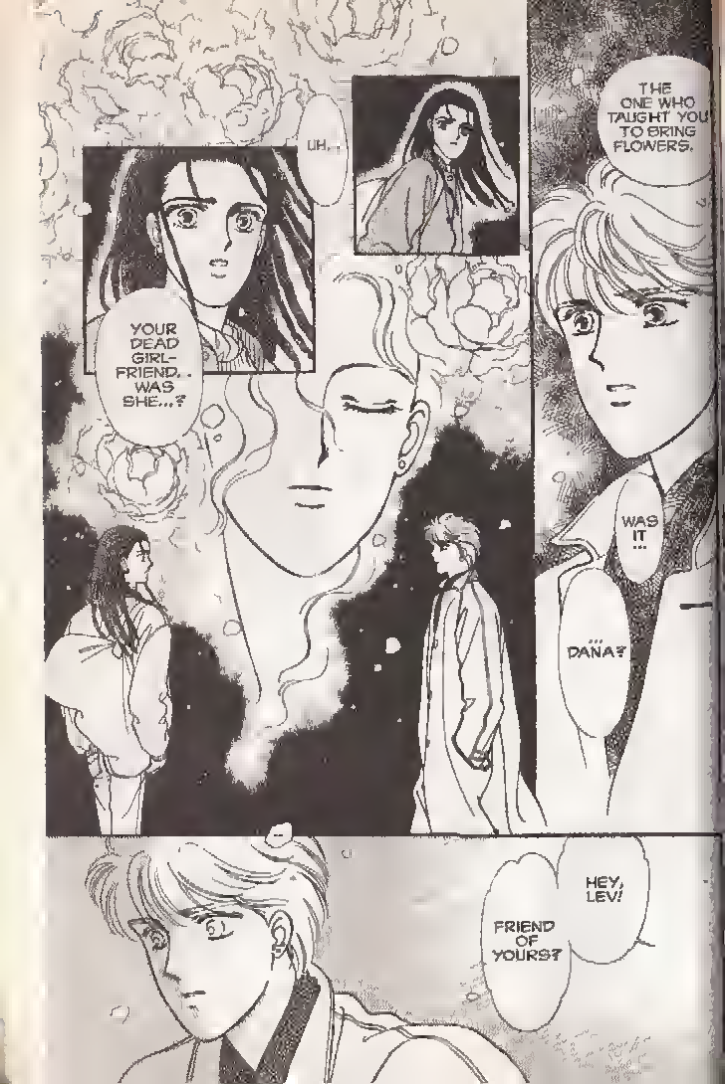
EVERY DAY I WENT ALL OVER TOWN WITH THE PRODUCER AND THE ACTORS, AND WE ALWAYS GOT BACK TO THE HOTEL AROUND THREE A.M. I WAS EXHAUSTED! BUT EMOTIONALLY IT WAS GREAT. IN MAY MANHATTAN WAS COVERED IN NEW FOLIAGE AND FLOWERS. IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE PLAYING CAMEO AND TTD AND DRAWING PICTURES OF DREADLOCKED RASTAFARIANS HANGING OUT IN THE PARK!

LEV! HEY, LEVINE! YOU'VE GOT A VISITOR!
OH...
SO THEY CALL YOU "LEV."
I DON'T LIKE MY FIRST NAME. THAT'S WHAT I TELL THEM TO CALL ME.
YOUR FULL NAME IS "ALEXANDRA LEVINE?"
YEAH.
IS YOUR FATHER THE CONDUCTOR AT THE MET?*
HA! NO WAY

*A REFERENCE TO JAMES LEVINE, CONDUCTOR OF THE METROPOLITAN OPERA

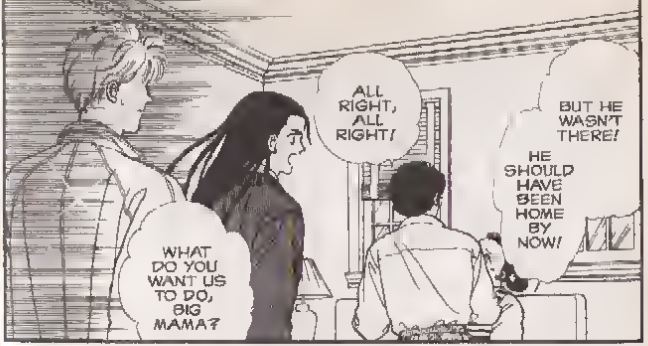

BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T ASK FOR MY ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER.
HOW COME?
TO TELL THE TRUTH, I DIDN'T THINK I'D EVER SEE YOU AGAIN.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ACTUALLY TRACKED ME DOWN.
NONE OF MY FRIENDS KNOW STUFF LIKE THAT.
THAT'S JUST LIKE YOU, BOSS.
I FELT A LITTLE GUILTY LATER ABOUT JUST SHOWING UP AT YOUR PLACE.
PSSH
SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE THAT DAY.
I WOULDN'T TELL IF MY LIFE DEPENDED ON IT.
YOUR TRUST IN ME IS RIDING ON IT.
GASHA
I APPRECIATE IT IF YOU DIDN'T TELL ANYBODY.
OH, SPEAKING OF WHICH...
OF COURSE!

LET ME RETURN THE HOSPITAL-ITY
MY HOUSE IS NEARBY.
HE'S GOT A STRONG SENSE OF OBLIGATION.
IF WE KEEP GOING NORTH
BOSS?

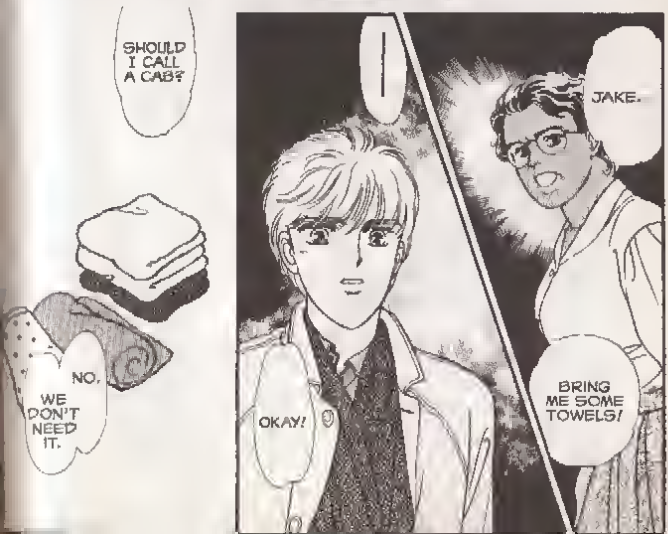

THE ONE WHO TAUGHT YOU TO BRING FLOWERS.
WAS IT ...
... DANA?
UH...
YOUR DEAD GIRL-FRIEND... WAS SHE...?
HEY, LEV!
FRIEND OF YOURS?

MAMA!
MAMA! THANK GOD YOU'RE BACK!
IT'S PATTY! SHE'S GOING INTO LABOR!
WHERE'S OTIS?
I DON'T KNOW! I CALLED HIM, BUT...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!

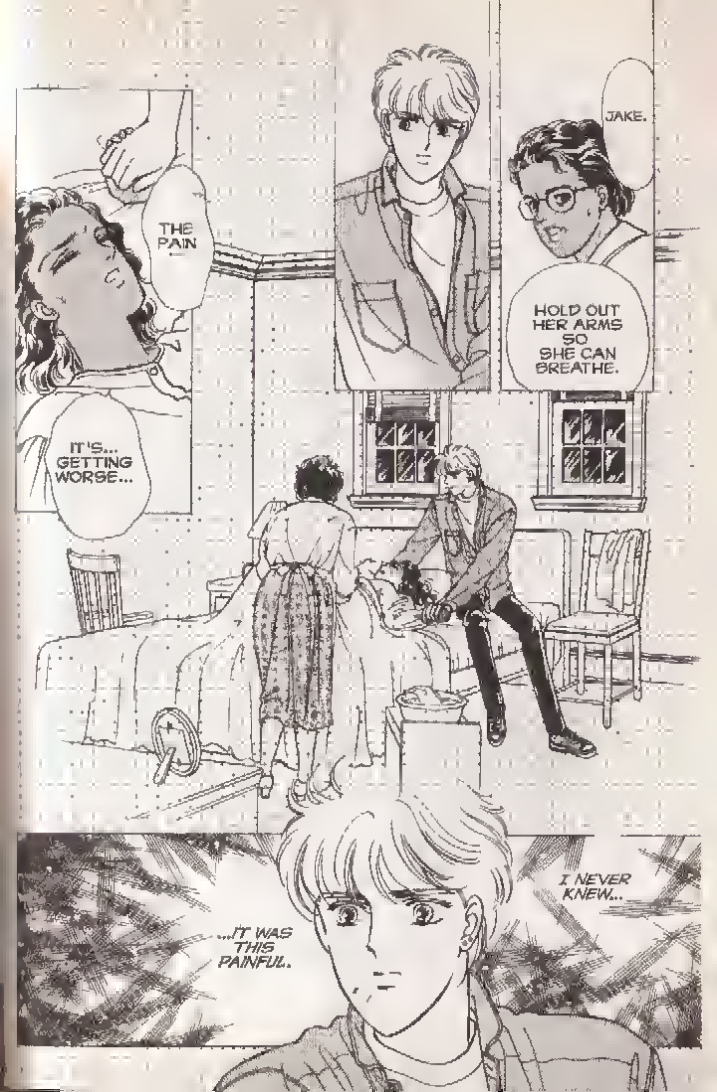
BOSS! DON'T RUN WAY!
I'M NOT RUNNING AWAY!
THEN COME ON!
THEY NEED OUR HELP!
DID HER WATER BREAK? HOW LONG AGO?
MAYBE THIRTY MINUTES AGO...
I CALLED OTIS AT HIS JOB!


WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO, BIG MAMA?
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HOME BY NOW!
BUT HE WASN'T THERE!

I'M ON IT!
LOOK EVERY-WHERE YOU CAN THINK OF.
GO FIND OTIS.

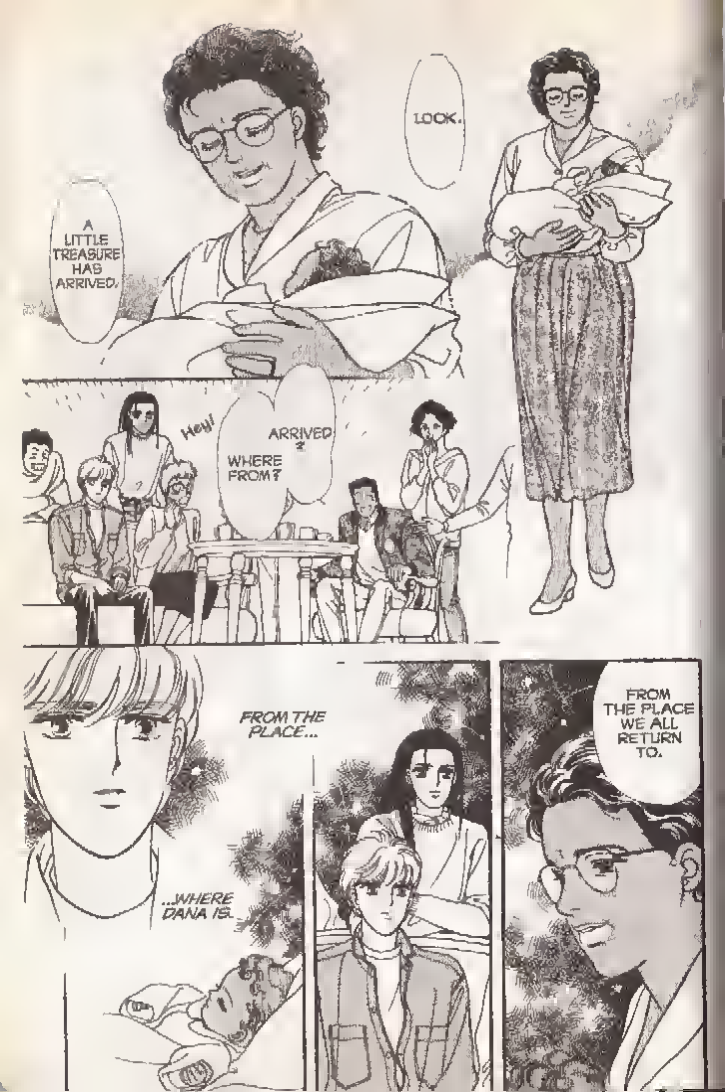

SHOULD I CALL A CAB?
NO. WE DON'T NEED IT.
OKAY!
JAKE.
BRING ME SOME TOWELS!

BUT JUST WHEN I NEED HER HUSBAND THE MOST, HE'S NOT HERE.
WHAT... YOU MEAN HAVE IT *HERE?!*
HER HUSBAND'S BEEN GOING TO LECTURES AT THE HOSPITAL. RECENTLY THERE'S A TREND TO HAVE BABIES AT HOME.
IT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN ANY DAY NOW.
HE'LL COME HOME SOON!
EITHER WAY...
IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO HANDLE THIS OURSELVES.

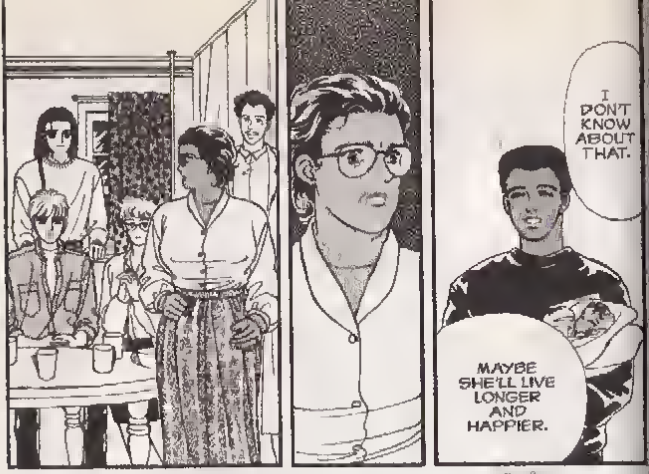

JAKE.
HOLD OUT HER ARMS SO SHE CAN BREATHE.
THE PAIN
IT'S... GETTING WORSE...
I NEVER KNEW..
...IT WAS THIS PAINFUL.

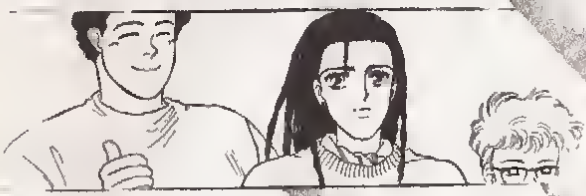
BIG MAMA! HERE'S OTIS!
THERE ... THERE IT IS.
I CAN SEE THE HEAD!
PATTY!
HURRY UP AND GET OVER HERE!
GOT IT!
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, BOYS.
WE'RE OKAY FROM HERE. GO GET SOME WARM WATER TO WASH THE BABY.
PATTY'S PRETTY CUTE, ISN'T SHE?
SHUT UP.
Secretly thinking the same thing

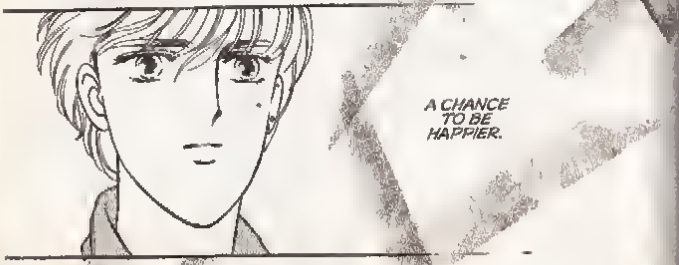
HEY, HOW'S PATTY?!
IS IT ALREADY OVER?
DID WE MISS IT?
WAAA!
IT'S A GIRL!
SHE'S HEALTHY! THE MOTHER AND BABY ARE BOTH FINE!
WOW!


A LITTLE TREASURE HAS ARRIVED.
LOOK.
Hey!
ARRIVED?
WHERE FROM?
FROM THE PLACE...
...WHERE DANA IS.
FROM THE PLACE WE ALL RETURN TO.

BUT IF YOU'LL ALLOW IT...
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, BIG MAMA, I WON'T DO IT.
SO, OTIS...
HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF A NAME?
BIG MAMA...
DO YOU MIND IF I NAME HER DANA?
NO, IT'S NOT GOOD.
TAKEN AWAY SO YOUNG...THAT NAME IS PROBABLY BAD LUCK.
DANA WAS SO WONDER-FUL.
AND EVERY-BODY LOVED HER.
I WANT HER TO GROW UP LIKE THAT.


I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
MAYBE SHE'LL LIVE LONGER AND HAPPIER.

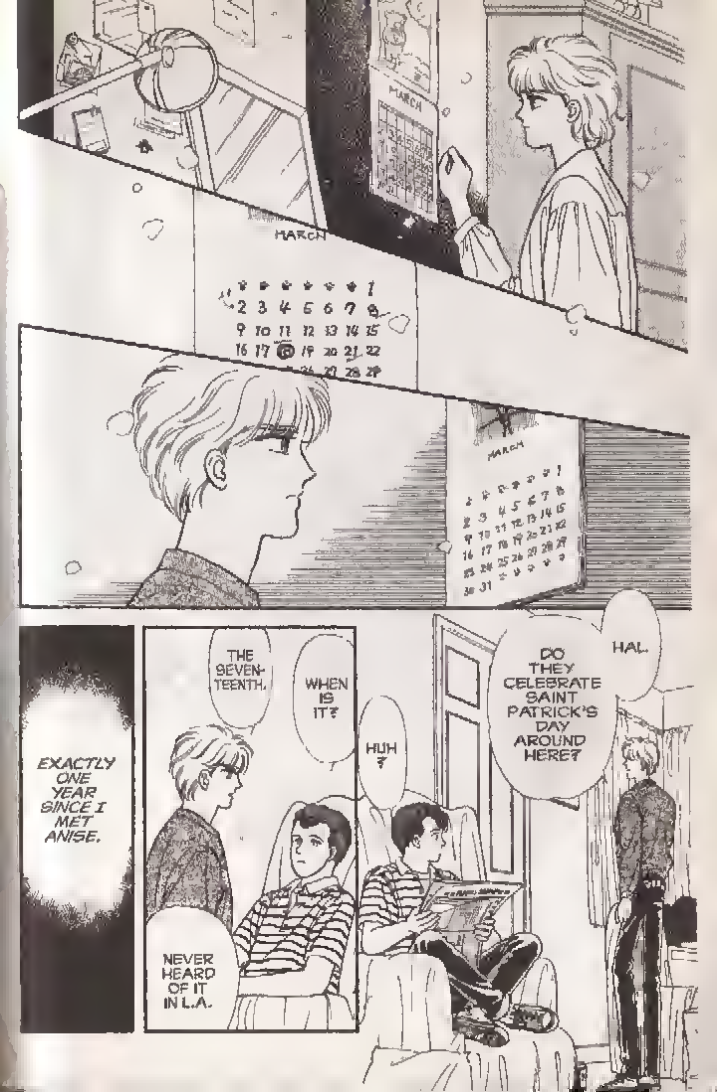

ONE MORE TIME.


A CHANCE TO BE HAPPIER.

IT'S BEEN QUITE A DAY.
A REALLY STRANGE DAY.
DANA.
IS THIS YOUR WAY OF JOKING WITH US?

JUST GOD?
OR IS THIS...

MARCH 9, 1986.
LITTLE DANA WAS BORN.


MARCH
MARCH
MARCH
EXACTLY ONE YEAR SINCE I MET ANISE.
THE SEVENTEENTH.
WHEN IS IT?
HUH?
NEVER HEARD OF IT IN L.A.
DO THEY CELEBRATE SAINT PATRICK'S DAY AROUND HERE?
HAL.

Scene 9 - BAD DREAMS
— The End

FIND OUT HOW CIPHER SETTLES IN TO HIS NEW LIFE IN L.A.! AVAILABLE IN JULY!

By Minako Narita. Cipher and his new roommate Haru seem to get along fine, although their different styles make them something like "The Odd Couple." When Cipher tells the story of his previous life with his twin brother and how orderly their existence was, Haru takes this as his cue to bring out Cipher's wilder side!

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